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Official Records

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New York

Co-Chairperson: Ms. Tarja Halonen ..... (President of the Republic of Finland)
Co-Chairperson: Mr. Sam Nujoma ..... (President of the Republic of Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Item 124 of the provisional agenda

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/55/345)

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): I should like to inform members that, since the issuance of document A/55/345 and Add. 1, the Gambia has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): This information will be reflected in document A/55/335/Add.2, to be issued.

Addresses on the occasion of the Summit *(continued)*

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, President of Georgia.

President Shevardnadze (*spoke in Georgian; English text furnished by the delegation*): I shall address the world leaders in the language of my small but ancient nation. This is yet another manifestation of the freedom that we have gained.

I cannot fail to acknowledge the comprehensive nature of the report of the Secretary-General. This is, indeed, a document worthy of a millennium. Today, I want to share with the Assembly some reflections, and some of the burdens in my heart. As members know, I participated in bringing the cold war — the longest war in history — to an end, and I am proud of that. Everyone here remembers a world that was split in two — a world of East and West, a world separated by the wall whose building blocks were those of class and ideological differences, a world in which the spectre of possible nuclear war was a constant threat.

My co-thinkers and I were convinced that once the cold war was over, expressions of anxiety about the end of humankind would end. This was a unique phenomenon: a world war ending without bloodshed. However, I cannot mask a certain disappointment resulting from today's realities.

The unsettled conflicts of today — both between and within States — could flare up into horrific conflagrations tomorrow. Figures on people suffering from hunger, tragic infirmities and illiteracy simply boggle the mind. Against the backdrop of such global shifts, my country has chosen to take a course towards democratic development. But what has come out of it? A handful of separatists relying on external forces split Georgia asunder, exterminating thousands of innocent people in the process. For eight consecutive years, 300,000 of my compatriots have remained ousted from their homes. More than half of the population is on the verge of hunger, although friends from the United

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States and other countries are helping. Again, I thank these friends for that.

The United Nations Security Council has adopted 23 resolutions on the Abkhaz conflict. And the result? Nothing. The Security Council has so far been unable even to call the ethnically based expulsion of people from Abkhazia by its appropriate name.

As the cold war came to a close, we spoke a great deal about a new world and a new order. Ten years have passed. The world order we all dreamed of is still in the distance. I, an optimist by nature, personally have grounds for skepticism. Earlier, we spoke of the bipolar world. Some suggest a multipolar world today. Who, then, will be able to assume responsibility for matters that cannot be shouldered by individual, sovereign States?

Again, I thank President Clinton and other leaders for the initiatives they have taken in this area. It is commonly known that as debts accumulate, the number of those suffering from hunger and sickness the world over is multiplying. This is not a populist appeal: at the dawn of this millennium, we must release poor and developing countries from the fetters of debt.

Many new, independent democratic States are now facing difficulties. In Georgia, for example, we have established democratic values and gained freedom for the nation and the individual. Yet we have not even come near to achieving a state of well-being for our people. Neither have corruption nor the shadow economy been defeated. This will require time.

In developing democratic States, a protracted process leading towards material welfare is calling democratic values into question. We cannot expect disillusioned people to derive their nourishment from ideals alone. As the Georgian saying goes, to a poor man misfortunes never come singly. When we had gained a relatively firm footing, and somewhat recovered our breath, environmental problems resulted in the obliteration of our harvest. Now, too, we are looking to our friends with hope. In my view, we can no longer doubt that the dangers of global warming are now upon us. Do we fully understand all that awaits our planet?

I believe that global environmental security should be the direct responsibility of the United Nations and its Security Council. To some degree, world food security should also be subject to centralized management. The resources and capabilities of the United Nations must dramatically increase and, of course, the role and responsibility of individual States should likewise grow. All these concerns indicate that addressing the problems we face in this millennium is a task that individual States — even the most powerful ones — cannot manage alone. There is a need for a uniting and bonding force, a body with broad competence and wide duties. There is a need for a fundamental restructuring of the United Nations and the Security Council to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

The Security Council must be expanded. I recall that, at the General Assembly in 1992, I spoke in favour of permanent membership for Germany and Japan. I wonder why the expansion issue has not yet been resolved. More new prospective members have appeared, and today, too, a reasonable solution can be found. I firmly believe that the right of veto must be limited. The Charter of the United Nations also needs to be adapted so as to factor in modern discoveries and the worst threats of the new era. The role and functions of the Security Council must be more clear cut. If I may borrow some words from the Secretary-General, the Security Council must have at its disposal a sufficient number of fire engines to put out the flames and maintain stability and peace in the world.

I concur with the Secretary-General's position on the International Criminal Court. However, we must ensure that it does not take us a whole new decade to make it happen. The interaction of such powerful regional organizations as the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe with the United Nations and its Security Council must be better coordinated and synchronized.

No individual State or group of States can resolve the problems facing humankind or, most importantly, save the human being, nature's crowning achievement.

And yet we must hope that independent democratic States will become stronger and that together we will ultimately create a new United Nations and a new Security Council which will be the central guarantee of peace and security.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Kessai H. Note, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

President Note: I extend warm greetings of "iokwe" from the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands . It is a great and distinct privilege to address this historic Millennium Summit of the United Nations.

I wish to commend the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for the comprehensive and outstanding report on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century. Directing the course of this Organization to meet the international community's expectations for many years to come will certainly demand our entire commitment.

I take this opportunity to recognize the contribution of the founding fathers and framers of the United Nations and its Charter. The vision, values, and principles espoused in the Charter have guided this Organization for well over half a century. The principles of democracy, respect for human rights and the right of self-determination of peoples in conformity with the principles of justice and international law should continue to underpin our collective development. I wish to reaffirm the adherence and commitment of the Marshall Islands to such principles for the collective good of all people.

It is due to these guiding principles that I enthusiastically welcome Tuvalu as the 189th Member State of the United Nations. As a Pacific Island neighbour, I am proud to be among those congratulating the Government and people of Tuvalu. While expansion might provide additional challenges, the admission of new Member States adds to the legitimacy of the Organization.

The guiding principles of the United Nations Charter have continued and will continue to be tested over the years. Exploitation, in many forms and varying degrees, of people, land, the oceans, the atmosphere, and their interactive and interdependent systems continue to pose real and immediate threats to the very existence of small island developing countries like the Marshall Islands. We need to be empowered so that technology and globalization can help us, but not at the expense of the lives and dignity of people and their countries. As it is with other small island countries, the Marshall Islands needs to have its feet rooted on land — on dry land, that is. Global warming and sea-level rise is threatening our very existence, and we call on the minds, the hearts and spirits of the individual and full membership of the Organization to strengthen all efforts to help us prevail over these threats.

The new order of globalization of economies is a phenomenon that requires closer consideration and coordination of this Organization, so as to create a positive force for dealing with the many challenges facing each individual country and our common humanity.

In the face of past turbulence and upheaval, this body has always attempted to fulfil its mission undaunted and without despair. The very establishment and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and its ongoing enforcement, albeit with limited means for follow-up, is a monumental accomplishment in itself. Nurturing the development of peoples, amidst varying degrees of vulnerabilities, so that they become, and continue to be, self-sufficient, self-sustaining, and equal participating partners in the advancement of the world may be a tall order for many of us and for our Organization, but that is why we are here today.

The role that the United Nations has played, and continues to play, to restore order and normalcy in various parts of the world including the Middle East and East Asia is to be commended. Its incessant and active support of humanitarian concerns, its dedicated mission against all forms of discrimination relating to religion, race, gender, health, education, income, ability and poverty indicates the magnitude of the responsibility and the burden that this body carries. Without the full support of all, the sustenance and promotion of these efforts will be difficult.

To fully reflect the original intention of the Charter, the United Nations will need to give a closer look at its own structures and the principles governing the operation of its essential organs. I am encouraged by discussions on issues relating to the operation of the Security Council on the matter of permanent membership, given the continuous emphasis this body places on the unreserved application of democratic principles. The conditions under which the International Court of Justice continues to be restrained from exercising the authority to issue binding decisions must be reviewed. How else can any international system of governance enunciate, promulgate, protect and deliver justice without the necessary force behind its own pronouncements? The perpetual financial background constraining the work of the United

Nations requires some bold steps. To continue to maintain the status quo and to persist in guarding it as sacrosanct in the face of new attitudes, perspectives, experience and knowledge, is to bat against the immutable law of change.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is encouraged by the growing recognition among leaders and people from all walks of life of the need for a universal framework for international peace. We aim to defeat the impact of world wars, of colonization, and of nuclear-weapon-test fallout. Despite our vulnerabilities, we want to be an active partner and Member of the Organization, its subsidiary bodies and other international agencies, and help to bring about peace and prosperity for all States, regardless of size. We support the promotion of international frameworks such as the Alliance of Small Island States as we promote the sustainability of our people and our world.

While we recognize the challenge of reducing the proportion of people suffering from hunger and the lack of a steady supply of safe water, as well as the challenge of the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases afflicting humanity, we must not forget that an educated population leads to a healthy and prosperous society.

I am indeed grateful for the United Nations forum. Without it, where else could nations voice and address freely their individual and universal concerns? I have enjoyed listening to the rich insights and thoughts expressed by my fellow world leaders, and I certainly look forward to group discussions later, when leaders will deliberate on specific global issues.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): Before proceeding to the next speaker on my list, I remind the Assembly that we have a very long list of speakers. I appeal to participants to respect as much as possible the five-minute speaking time allotted to each speaker. That will allow us to hear all the speakers on the list today.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, President of the Republic of Cape Verde.

President Monteiro (Cape Verde) (*spoke in Portuguese; French text furnished by the delegation*): First of all, allow me, Madam Co-Chairperson, to express my satisfaction at knowing that the difficult and honourable responsibility of guiding our work is in your hands. I am sure that your competence and well-known dedication will be placed fully at the service of the success of this historic Millennium Summit. As a representative of a small island developing State, I assure you that my participation in this major event is motivated by a feeling of great hope and by well-founded confidence.

My hopes look to the new millennium and to what it will inevitably bring: freedom, development and well being for mankind as a whole. In other words, it will be a millennium in which the dignity and worth of human beings will finally become the ultimate *raison d'être* and measure of the success of our common struggle for a world of peace, stability, progress and security.

But I am also speaking of the confidence that inspires us in the United Nations, and of the fundamental role the Organization should continue to play as a collective instrument, increasingly more modern and efficient, but always at the service of our peoples and bearing in mind the pressing global challenges, to which we must respond with solidarity and shared responsibility.

Among those challenges, I would like to mention the fight against poverty in particular. It is heartbreaking to see how many human beings throughout the planet, and particularly in Africa, face poverty as the major obstacle to a minimum of dignity in their lives and to the attainment of their most basic rights. It is urgent that we end that reality, which is tragic and is our common responsibility. The task is obviously a great one that must be put into perspective in a synergetic framework that brings about the solidarity of will and sufficient resources to ensure cohesion, efficiency and durability in the various policies and programmes at the national level.

The pace of events has accelerated in the last decade, accentuating in an unforeseeable way the dimension and nature of the tragedies we are experiencing. Their persistence is testing our confidence in ourselves and in our capacity to take on new challenges. But let us also recognize that there is now a renewal of conscience, a rejection of fatalism and a growing willingness among people to shape their own destinies.

What is being challenged is our quality as human beings and our sense of the balance and justice that should prevail throughout this planet, which we must

pass on to future generations liberated from unbearable disparities and asymmetries. In this connection, the international community as a whole, and the most advanced States in particular, must illustrate their capacity for solidarity. I am speaking in particular of increasing official development assistance and making a firm commitment to measures to eliminate the debt burden. That burden undeniably contributes to suffocating the meagre resources of many of our countries and seriously limiting their development policies.

The guiding values of the United Nations confer responsibility upon the Organization to mobilize all those who influence the success of the common fate of mankind. Nevertheless, it is just — and never unwarranted — to single out the specific cases of least developed countries and small island developing States, whose particular features justify special and differential treatment. Again, this is largely the situation on the African continent.

There is no doubt that the task in Africa is enormous, in the light of the facts, such as the harmful effects of diseases such as AIDS and malaria, and of armed conflicts, with their devastating consequences internally and regionally, as well as incipient access to international markets and the acquisition of technological progress and the benefits of a globalized world.

In any case, we are witness to an African recovery that cannot be confirmed historically, however, unless Africa is recognized, without any unjustified delay, as a priority on the international agenda. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that progress and stability on the African continent will make an important contribution to global stability and security, an essential contribution to a balanced, just and humane world that we all hope to build in this new century under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Miguel dos Anjos da Cunha Lisboa Trovoada, President of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe.

President Trovoada *(spoke in Portuguese; French text furnished by the delegation)*: It is a great honour and signal privilege for me to take part in this most important Millennium Summit, which has brought together such a significant number of the highest-ranking and most remarkable leaders of our planet.

This Summit is being held at a timely moment, at which the international community is facing serious challenges arising from the imbalances in the levels of development of Member States. While it is true that scientific and technological advances over the centuries have allowed spectacular progress to be made in the material sphere, it is nonetheless equally true that these same advances have led to no substantial improvement in the deeper nature of mankind, which is marked by a selfishness that continues to be the driving force of all its actions in defence of personal, group or state interests. As a result, a somber and regrettable picture has emerged of serious divisions among humanity in the early twenty-first century — divisions between citizens within a country and among nations in their international relations.

These relations are dominated by stark injustice, the consequences of which include the exacerbation of poverty among the poorest of the poor; the recurrent and insoluble issue of external debt; disease; famine; ignorance; unemployment; violations of human rights and of the rights of the child; the aggravation of violence and crime; and war and all its resulting horrors — in short, the human tragedy, which has become the banal norm of everyday life for a great portion of mankind in the face of the indifference or inactivity of another part of the same species.

The problems all seem to have been duly diagnosed and their causes identified. The material, technical, financial and human resources to address them do exist. From our humble perspective, what is lacking is the firm and determined political will of the entire international community to act in harmony with a view to stemming the deterioration of the situation, which is degrading and humiliating for those whose suffer its consequences and ultimately unworthy of those who are in a position to contribute to its eradication but do little or nothing.

It is clear that a more proactive attitude can evolve only out of the deep conviction that we are all part of the same human condition. Only this conviction and awareness can positively, dynamically and lastingly forge the interactive links of solidarity that will ensure the success of the great and noble aims of freedom, progress, justice and peace for all.

Although States have inalienable responsibilities in this area, we are convinced that the United Nations has an important role to play. It seems to us, however,

that our Organization, which was created over 50 years ago, must undergo some restructuring, particularly to restore a balance that would bring it more in line with the geopolitical changes that have taken place since its birth.

We also believe that its universal vocation should not be undermined by considerations that ensure that countries with several million inhabitants and recognized as independent by States Members of the United Nations, with which they have relations of sovereignty, are relegated to the margins of the Organization, even though they participate jointly and actively through international cooperation in the development efforts of other peoples. I am speaking specifically of the Republic of China on Taiwan. We are in favour of the free participation of peoples and the States that represent them internationally, just as we defend the free and democratic participation of citizens in national life, without discrimination or exclusion.

War is one of the scourges that cause the greatest damage in Africa, preventing the economic and social development of its peoples. Some African countries, indebted and with populations living in extreme poverty, have been at permanent war for decades. In their struggles, these same States use modern and sophisticated weapons which they do not produce themselves. In the name of minimal moral norms of behaviour, which should never be absent from domestic or international policy, it is urgent that action be undertaken to ensure effective control of the production, sale and distribution of all categories of weapons so as to prevent the belligerents from acquiring them at great cost, to the detriment of their reconstruction and development programmes.

We know from experience that, without development, democracy is very fragile. We are therefore participating in the Summit, convinced that its outcome will contribute to hastening economic growth, minimizing poverty and strengthening democracy in developing countries. We would express the hope that solidarity among states and peoples will gain in strength and that the spirit of equity and justice will henceforth prevail in relations among nations. Thus will the most fragile nations be able to cherish the hope that they will no longer be marginalized or sacrificed on the altar of economic and universal globalization.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President and Head of Government of the Republic of Djibouti.

President Guelleh (*spoke in French*): On this historic occasion, at which the United Nations community is meeting to celebrate the coming of the new millennium, I wish to bring this message of peace and friendship from the people of Djibouti.

Before all else, I would like to pay deep tribute to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for organizing this historic gathering. The report he has put before us gives us a broad range of ideas and proposals.

With the end of the cold war, the rise of globalization and the explosion of the information age, the decade of the 1990s was of great importance to humankind. Fortunately, the dawn of the new millennium gives us the opportunity to review and revise our programmes and reset our priorities. For the purposes of this Summit, the critical problems faced by humankind have been divided into four categories: peace and security; development, including the elimination of poverty; human rights; and the strengthening of the United Nations. As far as we are concerned, the problem that appears to be the most urgent is that of development and the elimination of poverty.

Today, some 3 billion people — in other words, almost half of humanity — suffer from hunger or food shortages. In a world that produces enough food to satisfy the needs of each and every man, woman and child, this is absolutely unacceptable. Hunger is the daughter of poverty; and for those who are abandoned, the despair that it engenders is in many respects the source of the four problems that we are addressing at this Summit.

The economic brushfire that is sweeping our planet today is known as globalization. It encourages the deregulation of markets, free trade and privatization. But in many parts of the world, particularly in Africa, a number of poor developing countries have been trapped in a spiral of impoverishment and social disintegration. Since they are not attractive to private foreign investors, countries with low savings levels, and low levels of domestic investment find themselves at a dead end. The international lending organizations, which have demanded that these countries tighten their belts still

more in the name of rational economic policies, seem to have contributed to the deterioration of the crisis.

Furthermore, for the poor countries to be able to achieve a real recovery and vigorous growth, the terrible debt burden problem must be resolved. Structural adjustment suggests a reduction of internal expenditure so that these countries can increase their exports and repay their debts. However, the internal constraints, the amount of debt, the degradation of the terms of trade and restricted access to markets of the developed countries mean at present, in the digital era, that the prospects are hardly encouraging.

To overcome this situation, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has proposed a large increase during this decade in aid to sub-Saharan Africa, which should be raised to $20 billion. This aid should contribute greatly to increasing savings and domestic investment and might bring about a sustainable growth rate of 6 per cent in the region, which, in turn, would attract foreign investment. Only the public financing bodies would be able to give such impetus to developing countries. At the present level of $10 billion per year, official development assistance is not playing its role as a catalyst of growth and merely perpetuates dependence upon aid.

As the South Centre recently reminded us, looking for change and improvement in these areas is not synonymous with asking for aid or further concessions; it is rather a matter of looking for policies, mechanisms and more equitable systems to strengthen the development process — and thus, the entire world economy. It is quite obvious that the main challenge with which we have to deal today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all peoples of the planet, rich and poor alike. The responsibility of managing international economic problems, as well as the risks and threats hanging over peace and security, must be shared by all. The collapse of the world economy would be the most serious systemic threat to world order that one could imagine. To avoid this, the world system cannot remain totally indifferent to the fate of the majority of the peoples on this planet.

We are witnessing the establishment of a new system of international values and a general growth of awareness, born of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On the one hand, we have rights that each individual should be able to exercise, including freedom of expression and conscience, freedom from poverty and fear and the right to life, liberty and safety of person, to name but a few. But today we know that these rights bring only limited advantages without a favourable social environment and at least minimal means of subsistence.

The main threat hanging over peace and security today is no longer external aggression by States against other States, but internal violence committed against communities and individuals. It is reaching crisis proportions throughout the world, but it is completely out of proportion in Africa, where conflicts, human rights violations, physical destruction and widespread displacements have anaesthetized the international community. The unbelievable savagery of certain conflicts and the unacceptable suffering inflicted have made it necessary for us to find new ways of helping people who are caught in these crises.

In this connection, we must activate and make urgent use of the new International Criminal Court, so that criminals who defy the law are brought to justice. Quite obviously, we have to strengthen considerably the peacekeeping capacities of the United Nations and address its structural weaknesses. Furthermore, we must enlarge the Organization's sphere of competence in peacekeeping to include civil administration, as has been the case in Kosovo and East Timor. In order effectively to deal with certain crises, the United Nations must be able to appeal to its Member States, which can supply well-trained and well-equipped contingents that act speedily to open up the way for peacekeeping forces to enter.

The elimination of conflicts in all their forms and the establishment of peace and security are among the principal tasks awaiting us if we wish to respond to our most urgent need, development and the elimination of poverty. In this respect, the Secretary-General has placed before us an enormous challenge: a 50 per cent reduction in the number of inhabitants of this planet living in extreme poverty between now and the year 2015. This represents almost a billion people.

Everyone agrees that this result ought to take place in the context of the sacrosanct market economy that is sweeping the globe. But the free trade system is mercilessly cruel. The multilateral institutions must maintain order and ensure the application of world regulations to ensure transparency and democratic equity. Otherwise, we are likely to succumb to the

tyranny of the market and international chaos. There must be a worldwide effort, a collective and international effort, at the centre of which will be the United Nations, representing the peoples and States of the world.

We think that it is in this context that we must address the question of strengthening the United Nations. We cannot allow the Organization to become more and more marginalized by all the administrative devices and procedures being introduced by certain States, while they refuse to disburse the funds to which the Organization has a legitimate right. Development will be limited if it is kept in the hands of the specialized agencies, far from the United Nations. Peace will be uncertain if it is largely in the hands of a United Nations dominated by a Security Council that is not representative.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm our faith in the future of the United Nations. The fate of our peoples is closely linked with its future. I am convinced that a restructured Organization, made more effective, will contribute to the coming of an era of peace and prosperity for all.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Petar Stoyanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

President Stoyanov: I hasten to express my country's support for the growing role and involvement of the United Nations in promoting and furthering democratic processes worldwide. Here we see a direct link with the maintenance and promotion of world peace and security, which, we believe, will continue to be a priority in the future activities of the United Nations.

The Republic of Bulgaria is actively involved in the international community's efforts to settle existing conflicts and secure lasting peace and economic prosperity throughout the world. That is why we support the need for an effective reform of peacekeeping operations.

I should like to inform the Assembly of the Bulgarian Government's decision to increase its financial contribution for United Nations peacekeeping operations despite the economic difficulties we are facing as a country in transition.

We gained our peacekeeping experience mainly during the Kosovo crisis. The conflict there demarcated a new phase in the development of the world, in which States are becoming increasingly interdependent and State sovereignty is acquiring new forms and content. Moreover, the crisis demonstrated that today's problems can be solved only through joint efforts prompted by shared universal human values rather than by temporary considerations.

While on the subject of Kosovo, let me share my view that the implementation of a long-term strategy for the economic stabilization of the region and its accelerated integration in European organizations is a key factor for the lasting solution of the crisis there and the restoration of peace and stability to South-eastern Europe. The Stability Pact for South-eastern Europe is a decisive instrument in that respect. It is the first-ever attempt at a post-crisis rehabilitation of a whole region in the context of globalization. Moreover, the economic reconstruction of the Balkans and the bid by many non-European countries to participate in it could be seen as an attempt to involve the region in the processes of globalization.

The past 10 years have given us sufficient evidence of the potential of globalization to address current problems and open up new horizons to humankind. This is particularly relevant for the countries that were part of the former communist system and are now seeking to carve their niche in this changed world.

At the same time, globalization has confronted us with challenges for which we have proved unprepared. It has become clear that we cannot opt or not opt for globalization: it is a fact that we cannot ignore. What we can do is grasp the growing need to manage globalization and act accordingly.

If we are to contain its negative effects, we should not allow it to take its course spontaneously, for it has a tendency to go beyond the economic and technical domain and spill over into the sensitive areas of culture, national traditions and customs. Here, its impact must be studied thoroughly, and ways of controlling it must be sought through new and relevant legislation in the area of intellectual property protection, including traditional knowledge and biodiversity.

Being convinced of the potential of the new information and communication technologies for advancing development, I would like to urge the most developed countries to facilitate access to the

"information superhighway" for the developing countries and the countries in transition. Bridging together the "digital divide" will encourage those countries to develop local content on the Internet.

Strengthening the role of the United Nations will require not only the reform, renovation and further effective institution-building of the world Organization, but also its proper adjustment to the new realities. I believe that the United Nations will continue to be a major factor in socio-economic, scientific and technical development, and in environmental protection and humanitarian cooperation at the national, regional and global levels. The objectives are clear: achieving sustainable development, addressing and tackling demographic problems, reducing poverty and ensuring sources of income for all social strata.

That is why we support the efforts — including those of the Secretary-General — to reform and restructure the Organization's socio-economic sector with a view to achieving the aforementioned objectives and creating a regional and global environment that would favour more dynamic and sustainable development. The Republic of Bulgaria has been making its contribution to this end, notably by participating in the work of the Economic and Social Council and supporting the activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

In closing, I would like to voice our conviction that guaranteeing and respecting individuals' human rights and basic freedoms is a cornerstone in the development of a democratic civil society. Bulgaria is a party to all major and universal human rights instruments, and we support the initiatives aimed at strengthening and increasing the role of United Nations control mechanisms in the area of human rights.

I hope that the Millennium Summit will set the stage for the United Nations to be able to successfully play its role in the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. René Préval, President of the Republic of Haiti.

President Préval (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General for convening this Summit and congratulate him on the depth of the report that he has submitted for our consideration.

In the 55 years of the existence of the United Nations — even though it has sometimes been denigrated — the history of the international community could not have been written without a constant reference to the Organization. Even today, in the face of a constantly changing global context with its impressive array of new challenges, we still deem it to be a key instrument for shaping the twenty-first century. The proof lies in this special high-level meeting, which aims to alleviate concerns about old and new problems for which we still do not have a solution.

The Republic of Haiti, a founding Member of this Organization, is still, 200 years after winning its political independence, endeavouring to emerge from underdevelopment and is to that end seeking to contribute to common thinking on ways of honing the important instrument for action that is the United Nations system.

Among our pressing concerns, certain ones are of particular importance to us, because how we respond to them will determine the shape of the world to come.

First, there is a need to guarantee dignified living conditions for all human beings. Indeed, we know that millions of people are living in abject poverty and under the constant threat of social upheaval, whereas, in the history of mankind, the capacity to create wealth has never been as great.

Secondly, we must genuinely democratize the new knowledge — and information-based economy. We note that there has been a considerable increase in know-how and striking technological progress, but so far access to it is limited to just a few. This constitutes a new source of inequality and divisions — among and within nations. How then can we put an end to exclusion and prevent the gap from deepening, until such time as it can be closed? What is the point of setting foot on Mars if there is still hunger in several regions of our planet?

My third concern is the drift of power from politics to finance and the economy. Constant flows of capital and international trade tend to diminish nation-States and to give rise to supra-national bodies that are not elected by the people. By electing only politicians and not financial representatives, are we not turning democracy into a utopian ideal?

My fourth concern is the immense, formidable power of the communication media, which seems to be in the hands of just a few. Their uncontrolled use of

those media destroys those who oppose them; yet the media could solve a great many problems were they truly placed at the service of human advancement.

My final concern is the pandemics that are devastating certain nations, especially the poorest, threatening their very survival. The human cost of these tragedies is scandalous, especially since the means exist to alleviate them considerably. But questions of profitability are often raised here: for many, the economic factor completely outweighs human considerations. That being so, how can we address these tragedies and place the higher interests of mankind above mercenary considerations?

The era of autarky is behind us. States can no longer formulate policy without taking account of regional and global frameworks relating, for instance, to drugs, terrorist networks, organized crime and pandemics, all of which form part of a global context. Without establishing "rules of the game", and without some form of adjudication, globalization will be a jungle.

That is the mission of international organizations, led by the United Nations, which can make it possible to build peace and promote development. We must consolidate the authority and legitimacy of the United Nations by democratizing it in order to enhance its effectiveness and ensure that it can successfully address the new challenges of a globalized world.

For us, the key is to take a dispassionate look at the avalanche of past initiatives and at their meagre results, and boldly to create a world with an international public-spiritedness, a world in which solidarity will prevail over market control. Globalization is not new: slavery, colonialism and the two world wars of the twentieth century are evidence of that. What is frightening today is that globalization tends to take the form of the privatization of all power.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Robert Kocharian, President of the Republic of Armenia.

President Kocharian (*spoke in Armenian; interpretation furnished by the delegation*): The report of the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century (A/54/2000) is highly commendable. Armenia shares the views and approaches reflected in the report with respect to the challenges and objectives of our uniquely global Organization.

At the dawn of the new millennium, the scope of our opportunities — and, at the same time, of our problems — has reached a qualitatively new level. Armenia is confident that the United Nations, given its outstanding role, has the best potential to address these new challenges in the most appropriate manner. The vast experience of the United Nations throughout the 55 years of its activities is unique. With this in mind, we should be more dynamic in adapting United Nations instruments and institutions to the new realities.

Maintaining peace and security throughout the world will obviously remain a major priority for the United Nations in the twenty-first century. The contemporary world map continues to be densely spotted with local conflicts and, as a result, with human suffering. The United Nations has been heavily engaged in conflict resolution in various parts of the world. At the same time, Armenia believes that the existing potential of the United Nations for the prevention of new conflicts is not being fully utilized. It has become imperative to promote the establishment of comprehensive early warning mechanisms for potential conflicts. Wars do not erupt unexpectedly; they have their histories and their logic, and can be predicted.

In our contemporary world, the notion of security has transcended its conventional boundaries. Globalization has opened up societies to an unprecedented degree. As never before, the activities of individual Governments have become tightly linked to interdependent and concerted action at the subregional, regional and global levels. Integration has become politically and economically expedient. It is apparent that the new environment of coexistence requires new approaches in the activities of international organizations. Only collective efforts can make it possible for the advantages of globalization effectively to materialize and for its negative consequences to be averted. In other words, the world of the twenty-first century has acquired all the prerequisites for genuine stability based on collective action and responsibility. That is Armenia's hope.

Armenia is entering the new millennium with the celebration next year of the one thousand seven hundredth anniversary of the adoption of Christianity as a State religion. Our centuries-old history and our

Christian traditions, along with our geographic location, have contributed to our profound understanding of the importance of coexistence and of a dialogue among civilizations.

Armenia belongs to a part of the world that over the past 10 years has been subjected to a major political and social transformation. Having inherited unresolved problems from the past, Armenia and the entire region of the South Caucasus have not remained immune to conflict. The current realities continue to exert considerable pressure on the fledgling fabric of our country's new social and political relations.

Nevertheless, Armenia continues to build an open society based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. We intend to further expand our cooperation within the United Nations and to participate actively in various regional institutions, in particular the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. We have approached the final stages of accession to membership of the Council of Europe, which is evidence of our commitment to the policy of multiple engagements as an effective instrument for advancing security through cooperation.

We remain convinced that the region of the South Caucasus is in need of a regional system of security, and we stand ready to work towards its formation.

Armenia remains committed to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. We will continue to work intensively with the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group, and we highlight their contribution to maintaining the ceasefire regime. Equally, we are ready to maintain direct contacts with Azerbaijan in order to search for compromises, although we think that direct negotiation between Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh would be more productive. At the same time, we are convinced that it is already possible at this stage to advance economic cooperation between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which would certainly facilitate and expedite the establishment of a lasting peace. Here, we are convinced that the Nagorny Karabakh conflict can be resolved only on the basis of the legal equality of the parties to the conflict.

The contemporary experience of conflict resolution reflects the changing nature of inter-State and intra-State relations. It clearly shows the need to go beyond the boundaries of conventional perceptions of sovereignty.

The Armenian nation is unfortunately destined to carry the problems of the past century into the new millennium. Turkey's continuing denial of the genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire has only intensified our aspirations for historical justice. Some countries and nations were in the past burdened by similar problems; however, they managed to overcome them by taking reconciliatory actions, with the support of the international community. Penitence is not humiliation; rather, it elevates individuals and nations. I am confident that a constructive dialogue with Turkey will allow us jointly to pave the way towards cooperation and good-neighbourly relations between our two peoples.

In conclusion, I would like to once again congratulate all of us on the occasion of the Millennium Summit, which, given the impressive level of representation, gives proof of our shared commitment to peace and cooperation in our common house.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia.

President Ben Ali (*spoke in Arabic*): The early signs of détente among States — signs that appeared in the late 1980s — aroused high hopes that mankind would fulfil its legitimate aspirations for peace, prosperity and a greater development of international relations so as to achieve a more equitable sharing of burdens and responsibilities. That period, however, was soon followed by tensions and conflicts, with the attendant spread of epidemics and diseases, deterioration of the environment, aggravation of poverty and indebtedness, disruption of financial markets and a resumption of the arms race. In the context of this universal crisis, it was incumbent upon the international community to formulate a set of joint initiatives and to codify its interventions within a framework of partnership based on a series of effective programmes and mechanisms to address existing problems.

Though globalization has provided new economic opportunities, accompanied by amazing scientific and technological advances, this has not prevented the widening of the gap between States as regards the pace of development, or the worsening of disparities between rich and poor. This has indeed aroused fears

and prompted most observers to call for the establishment of a joint area of prosperity, which would ensure balanced and sustainable development for all the nations of the world, without any exclusion or marginalization.

We in Tunisia have followed a balanced strategic approach based on the principle of the universality of human rights as well as on the values of democracy, pluralism and solidarity, and on reconciling the requirements of promoting the economy with those of social progress. We have also chosen to be guided in our development programmes by the decisions of the conferences held by the United Nations over the past decade in several fields.

The tragic living conditions of certain peoples, due to poverty and disease, have prompted us to call for the adoption of solidarity and cooperation among States as an absolute humanitarian and moral necessity. In this regard, we have proposed the conclusion of a partnership and development contract between developing and developed countries, and the recycling of debts for investment in developmental and environmental projects. We have also proposed the creation of a world fund for solidarity and poverty eradication, to serve as an instrument for strengthening the mechanisms of humanitarian intervention, and as a means to fight poverty in the most destitute parts of the world.

While this proposal stems from our firm belief that solidarity among States and peoples is a humanitarian duty and a moral obligation, it is essentially based on our conviction that human rights constitute an indivisible whole, which will only be made complete by safeguarding human dignity and by providing man, wherever he may be, with the wherewithal to lead a decent life. While expressing our appreciation for the positive response given to our initiative by many heads of State and United Nations officials, as well as by numerous international and regional organizations and conferences, we note that we rely on the delegations' sense of humanitarian responsibility and their goodwill to work for an early realization of this proposal.

The African continent continues to this day, for many reasons, to suffer from conflicts, deprivation and the heavy weight of indebtedness. This state of affairs requires the international community to take early action in the form of firm and expeditious humanitarian initiatives to alleviate the suffering of our continent, to strengthen peace efforts there, and to help the continent overcome existing obstacles to its development process and to minimize the danger of the spread of epidemics, particularly AIDS, among the masses of its population.

I would like on this occasion to touch on the vital issue of human rights that dominates the current debate at the United Nations — namely, that these rights are being used nowadays as a pretext for interference in other countries' affairs. Tunisia, which has ratified all relevant international treaties and covenants, is determined to participate in developing a more democratic conception of international relations within the framework of an integrated diplomacy and on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and its express provisions, including the duty to respect the principle of sovereignty, non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States and the serious, impartial and equitable treatment of all questions and issues under consideration.

We are being asked today to renew our adherence to the United Nations, which constitutes an ideal framework, incorporating all components of the international community, and is a fundamental base for multilateral action. To that end, we must all cooperate in reforming the structures of the Organization and in developing its working methods, while maintaining the permanent features and the foundations on which the Organization is built.

It is our fervent hope that this historic summit will open for us, as we step into the third millennium, broad perspectives for using the great transformations and rapid technological progress that our world is witnessing for the benefit of all mankind. This is a historic occasion that impels us to reaffirm our responsibilities to all peoples of the world, and particularly to the brotherly Palestinian people, so that they can regain their legitimate rights and build their independent State on their national soil with Al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital. These responsibilities also require us to renew our commitment to the United Nations and our adherence to its charter and the noble purposes and principles enshrined in it.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Fernando de la Rúa, President of the Argentine Republic.

President De la Rúa (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to convey to you, Madam, and to your Co-Chairperson, my pleasure at seeing you presiding over this historic Millennium Summit.

There are many issues related to the role of the United Nations in the new millennium. Because of the time factor, I will refer to only one to which my country attaches great importance: poverty elimination as a way of preventing international conflicts or internal conflicts with international ramifications characteristic of our times.

I wish to highlight the fact that poverty elimination is a fundamental factor in conflict prevention, becoming the approach which, in the present world, assumes the greatest relevance and magnitude for the international community.

It is necessary that there be an awareness of the relationship existing between poverty — particularly extreme poverty, malnutrition and hunger — and violence, and that measures be adopted aimed at refining a system of conflict resolution in keeping with this new scenario.

It is vital that developing and developed countries act together. We will only be able to contribute to the resolution and prevention of new hotbeds of tension on the basis of firm common will. The priority attached to sustainable development in the less developed countries, although not the sole prerequisite, nonetheless represents an essential component of effective action to avoid violence.

This leads us to take up again the framework theme of the Summit: the role of the United Nations in the new millennium. The formulation of new preventive measures aimed at eradicating poverty is undoubtedly a responsibility and a role that our Organization must exercise in accordance with the new role that the international community expects of the United Nations. The relationship between peace and development is an increasingly intense one, a theme I raised in the round table this morning. We must target the real causes of the majority of present conflicts. In that way, cooperation programmes and projects for the needy populations will contribute to generating the atmosphere of peace and development necessary to ensure a culture of prevention, stability and tolerance.

I agree with the Secretary-General that emergency assistance, combatant demobilization, mine clearance, the organization of elections, social reconciliation and the restoration of basic social services for communities affected by war will not be enough if, at the same time, ongoing long-term development programmes are not implemented in the areas of basic education, health and employment. We should not forget that the developed countries have a decisive role and a great responsibility in eradicating poverty. I am not only speaking about official development assistance, but also of activities to integrate the least developed countries into international trade, and to eliminate barriers, quotas, subsidies or other mechanisms that restrict trade or investment. It is therefore necessary, recognizing the existence of a shared future, to assume a firm commitment of common responsibility based on the principles of equity and solidarity.

This Summit should leave us with the conviction that we need to develop preventive measures to attain sustainable development for the most backward areas and that these would not be depleted by short-term solutions after the outbreak of conflicts, but would neutralize crises before they emerge.

I wish to conclude by stating that the dispute between my country and the United Kingdom over the Malvinas, the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas is on this Organization's programme of work, which, through several resolutions, has requested the Governments of my country and the United Kingdom to resume negotiations to find a just and lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute, thus ending a colonial situation imposed by force in 1833.

I wish to renew my country's commitment to the United Nations in the new universal dimension of peace and justice.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey.

President Sezer (*spoke in Turkish; English text furnished by delegation*): We are privileged to have two prominent statesmen, one from the northern hemisphere and the other from the southern hemisphere, co-chairing this Summit. It is also a tribute to the United Nations to see the President of Namibia presiding over this unique event; a President whose nation's struggle for independence was spearheaded on the international front through the work of the Council

for Namibia, in which Turkey had the honour of serving as Vice- and Acting-President.

It is with a deep sense of responsibility that I have the honour to address this largest gathering yet of world leaders here at the United Nations General Assembly. We are expected to deliver the right messages in order to chart the right course for the third millennium. We should seek to ensure a better life for successive generations. As the United Nations Secretary-General rightly states, the freedom from want, the freedom from fear and the freedom of future generations to sustain their lives constitute the three overarching objectives for achieving further human progress. We are living in a world where hope exists side by side with desperation, opportunities lie against poverty and great difficulties and joy are often overshadowed by gloom. That we, as the global community, today still expend vast resources for benign and malign causes is perhaps the most profound irony of our time.

Globalization means and offers new opportunities to mankind. But we must still be diligent to avoid making the rich richer and the poor poorer. Indeed, the world community, and the wealthy countries in particular, have to respond energetically and sincerely to the call, strongly expressed by the Secretary-General, first to alleviate and ultimately to eradicate what constitutes one of our greatest concerns — poverty across the globe. Africa needs the greatest attention.

With regard to this common quest, the experience of my nation's struggle for progress and prosperity has taught us valuable lessons. Thus, we consider reliance upon and respect for the will of the people the single most important value to be upheld. Only through this fountainhead will other values flow and the rule of law become supreme. We must see to it that civil society plays an increasingly significant role in the process of extending the frontiers of democracy and safeguarding this unsurpassed regime against extremism and fanaticism of all sorts. We must bear in mind that democratization and economic development are two parallel processes. In addition, assigning the highest priority to educating our youth will yield the greatest benefit in both moral and material terms.

Indeed, the events of the last century have taught us that we must ensure a fair distribution, on the national and global scales, of the benefits of free-market economies and new technologies; that we must respect the environment as a vital common asset we are to bequeath to future generations; and that we must strengthen regional and international peace and security for the benefit of all. In a nutshell, growing interdependence between our nations is a must, not a vice, and we must therefore heed the universal values from which this process takes its roots. These goals can be achieved only if they are made to reflect our common aspirations and are supported by meaningful international cooperation.

Turkey is determined to be more actively engaged in the endeavours of the reinvigorated United Nations as we become stronger in diverse fields, which range from democratic institutions to the economy, from disaster-preparedness to social and cultural development.

We are going through a defining moment in the history of the United Nations. The noble objectives enshrined in its Charter are as valid today as they have ever been. On the other hand, we remember the many sad and tragic moments when this great Organization had to stand as an idle spectator to the scourges of warfare and human disaster, deprivation, abject violations of basic rights, famine and calamity.

The Secretary-General was right once again when pointing to the need of developing a "culture of prevention", along with the need to elaborate the central role of the United Nations in preventing conflicts. Indeed, besides providing economic and social assistance, the United Nations must be strengthened in its capacities to prevent and end conflicts. Hence, we are very pleased that the thrust of the millennium report will be reflected in the document that we shall be adopting tomorrow.

In this context, I need to stress the importance of avoiding the perpetuation of stereotype resolutions that do not help resolve disputes and conflicts, and in which the realities of the subject matter are not really taken into account. Likewise, we think there is a definite need for reforming the Security Council in a way that will yield improved representation, transparency, accountability and that will reflect the principle of sovereign equality.

These things are easy to state. Translating them into reality will continue to be our main task. This Summit possesses the potential to make an impact on

the conscience of the international community in order to get action started and to accelerate it.

I wish to conclude by saying that the children of this world — the children of the twenty-first century wherever they may be, in the southern or northern hemisphere, but first and foremost children threatened by insecurity and poverty — they deserve a better future, a good future. This Summit of world leaders bears the responsibility for making this happen.

Finally, I would like to comment on the statement made by the Armenian President, which I heard with great regret. History must be evaluated by historians.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Rexhep Meidani, President of the Republic of Albania.

President Meidani: The past half-century has seen a revolution in the way in which nations are governed. Fifty years ago, the majority of the nations that are now Members of the United Nations did not have self-determination, and many of them were ruled by colonial masters or Marxist regimes. Today, the challenges of economy and security are very different from those confronted during the cold war. But today's values are still being defied by dictators and authoritarian demagogues, and in some cases, fascism is still a threat in parts of Europe.

One such example is the Balkans, where the entire development of the region is being kept hostage by the wars caused directly by the criminal regime in Belgrade. The current crisis in the territory of the former Yugoslav Federation started in Kosovo in 1989, and it will come to an end only after the right solution can be found to this crisis, including a new, free and democratic Kosovo and the reconsideration of various problems in the former Yugoslavia and of its membership in the United Nations.

If we go back to our history, the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia established, in place of the crumbling Holy Roman Empire, nation States. But a pure nation State is difficult to find in the real word. That is why I believe that instead of the old concept of classic independence we must apply a new concept of interdependence. I think this is the path for Europe and the Balkans to make the principle of self-determination compatible with the principle of interdependence within the united States of Europe. Such a path does not mean the dissolution of national sovereignty, but rather the sovereign choices nation States are making to devolve more power to local and regional authorities or to pool their sovereignty within supranational authorities. This is also the way to make the concept of national sovereignty compatible with the concept of globalization and its sub-phenomenon, regionalization.

However, as we moved through the 1980s and the 1990s, there was considerable progress in the world towards the democratic governance. But the question we must ask ourselves is this: can we yet reach the limit of our avowed goal of good governance while there are still Members of the United Nations that insist on maintaining a state of conflict or even a state of war with other Members? The answer is, frankly, no. Also, today it is quite clear that many countries, Albania included, have made an important move towards good governance. Particularly in the Balkans, they are embarking on a more complex set of reforms, in the framework of the Stability Pact.

It is now clear to us that where there is strong domestic commitment to sound policies, international contributions can be highly productive. This conclusion is by no means new. A striking vision of good and bad government is seen in the famous fourteenth century Siena frescos by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, entitled "The Effects of Good and Bad Government". Over recent decades we have embraced anew those old truths and deepened our understanding of poverty and how it can be overcome, and changed the experience of helping poor regions.

Lecturing the poor countries and criticizing their own weak governance while providing little money to support technological advances, public health, education and other needs, is cheap all right, but it simply does not work. The strategy must be modified. It is the same regarding environmental policy, which is still largely concerned with repairing only what was wrong and is limited to a few recycling systems.

It is now generally accepted that, with the end of the cold war, old ideological divisions are mostly over. But a more intractable division is taking hold, this time based on technology. A small part of the globe, accounting for about 15 per cent of the earth's population, provides nearly all of the world's technology innovations. A second part, perhaps half of the world's population, is able to absorb and adopt these technologies. The remainder, about a third of the

world's population, caught in a poverty gap, is technologically disconnected. Unfortunately and ironically, this trend is accentuated by the increasing importance of information technology, which puts greater power and economic rewards in the hands of the wealthy and well educated. My call is for rich countries to recognize this fact and to respond so that, at least, chances can be created for many of the technologically excluded regions to be able to adopt the new technology and join in the benefits of globalization.

Today, there are growing doubts about the future of world policy, the world economy and world civilization, particularly with regard to the role and strength of different international organizations and, more specifically, the reform of the world's leading financial institutions. We must now encourage all the ongoing changes and adjustments designed to increase their effectiveness and dynamism, through new, effective rules and even — there is no reason why not — new principles. One of the solutions could be to reduce the requirement for consensus, particularly with regard to crisis prevention, as well as post-crisis management. In this regard, efforts should be made to reach an agreement on the principles of expanding both categories of Security Council membership, permanent and non-permanent, and of including both developing and developed countries in the permanent membership.

In the process of rapid globalization, I think that some fundamental pillars should be conceived, such as the strengthening of the ideology of peace, freedom and human rights as the philosophy of this century; the establishment of a moral free-market economy on an international scale; the empowerment of international instruments for security and policy-making; and the development of linguistic pluralism and cultural diversity instead of human homogenization. Finally, there should be a realistic approach to the concepts of sovereignty, the nation, the state, government, civil society, world order, security and democratization.

I am certain that this Millennium Summit is projecting the right path to respond to these problems. I am convinced that that is our challenge. That is our new frontier: cross it we can, and cross it we must.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada.

Mr. Chrétien (Canada): I will begin by expressing Canada's outrage at the murder of innocent, unarmed humanitarian personnel in West Timor. Those who attack United Nations staff attack this Organization and undermine the purposes and principles we have all come here to reaffirm. It is incumbent on the Indonesian Government to bring the perpetrators to justice.

As we mark a new millennium, the United Nations is the world's indispensable institution, and Canada is unshakably committed to its common goals and shared vision. I am pleased that the Secretary-General is using this millennium watershed to focus our attention on reforming the United Nations. I wish to assure him that Canada will be a creative partner in this effort.

Canada's embrace of the United Nations reflects our common values and shared experiences. An incredibly diverse nation, we are deeply committed to freedom, tolerance, justice and equality. We know the sense of community that comes from sharing prosperity and opportunity. We have experienced what human ingenuity and creativity can achieve when people are free from want, free from fear and free from war.

In the new century, Canada's vision is of a world in which all people enjoy these same blessings. The United Nations is our best hope to marshal the common sense of purpose needed to realize this vision. But it must meet the challenge of change.

(*spoke in French*)

The rise of ethnic nationalism, such as in the Balkans or Central Africa, is a stain on our humanity. It also greatly complicates peacekeeping operations, whose mandates must now include provisions for the protection of civilians at risk and be matched with the necessary resources.

Canada was one of the principal architects of peacekeeping. We are also one of the most active participants in peacekeeping operations. We therefore encourage all Member States to be guided by the recommendations of the Secretary-General's Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.

We must redouble our efforts to deny the agents of violence and conflict their sources of supply by halting the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and by controlling the illicit trade in diamonds. We must continue to make the security of

people our first priority. The Ottawa Convention banning landmines and the agreement on the Statute of the International Criminal Court are important milestones in this respect. In a few days' time, Canada will host an International Conference on War-affected Children.

(*spoke in English*)

I am also pleased to announce that Canada, with the support of interested foundations, is leading the establishment of an independent international commission on intervention and State sovereignty. Our Foreign Minister will shortly outline the rationale and mandate of the commission.

Alleviating world poverty is our common cause. We must share the benefits of globalization. We must give it a human purpose and a human face. The poorest countries require access for their goods to export markets. Faster, deeper and broader debt relief should be pursued vigorously through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. We must ensure that development does not degrade the global environment.

We must also bridge the digital divide. We must ensure that the benefits of the information revolution are shared by all. That is why Canada endorses the creation of a United Nations Information Technology Service. As former Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson used to say, the United Nations must be a symphony orchestra, not a string quartet. For that to happen, it has to be supported in all respects, politically and financially. All Members must pay their bills.

With the will and the resolve, the United Nations will remain the world's indispensable institution in the twenty-first century. Canada is committed to being an indispensable partner.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Yoshiro Mori, Prime Minister of Japan.

Mr. Mori (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; English text furnished by the delegation*): Fifty-five years have passed since the United Nations was established. Throughout this period, and particularly since the end of the cold war, progress has been made in the efforts to achieve peace and prosperity. On the other hand, there continue to be tensions and conflicts, and concerns over the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are growing as well. While progress in science and technology and the advancement of globalization are making greater prosperity possible for humankind, the gap between the haves and the have-nots in the international community is widening. Moreover, common challenges in such areas as the environment and health also demand our attention.

These are the conditions that prevail as we enter the new century. Today, in the limited time available, I should like to emphasize two points in particular. The first is the importance of dealing with issues confronting the international community from a human-centred point of view, and the second is the need to strengthen the functions of the United Nations in the new century.

At the dawn of a new century, we are faced with various problems such as conflicts, human rights violations, poverty, infectious diseases, crime and environmental destruction, which threaten the existence and dignity of each and every person. We must deal with these problems from the standpoint of the importance of each individual. This is the concept of human security. With human security as one of the pillars of its diplomacy, Japan will spare no effort to make the twenty-first century a human-centred one.

The United Nations must play, and indeed is expected to play, a more active role in promoting such a human-centred approach. Based upon this recognition, Japan has to date contributed more than 9 billion yen — or well over $80 million — to the human security fund, which was established at the United Nations in March 1999. In the near future, Japan intends to make a further contribution to this fund of approximately 10 billion yen, or roughly $100 million. Japan also intends to establish an international committee on human security, with the participation of world renowned opinion leaders, and to further develop and deepen the concept of this human-centred approach.

Next, it is essential that the functions of the United Nations be strengthened and, in particular, that the Security Council be reformed so that it can further maintain the peace and security of the international community, which may well be a prerequisite for ensuring human security in the twenty-first century. It is clear that the Security Council of today does not fully reflect the realities of the international community as it enters the twenty-first century. In order to enhance the legitimacy of the United Nations, it is urgently

necessary to reform the Security Council so that it can effectively fulfil its expected role through its activities for the prevention of conflicts and the maintenance of peace and security.

From this rostrum, I strongly appeal to the representatives of all Member States present: let us create a groundswell of support for the early realization of Security Council reform, through our discussions at this Millennium Summit and the Millennium Assembly to follow. I am convinced that a large majority of Member States already support the expansion of the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Council, as well as the inclusion of both developing and developed countries in the expanded permanent membership. Let us confirm this as a starting point and build up agreements, one by one, on those issues of Security Council reform on which we can agree.

I must also emphasize that in order to strengthen the functioning of the United Nations, it is necessary to urgently secure a sounder financial base. Towards that end, let us cooperate to realize an effective yet efficient use of financial resources and a fairer and more equitable sharing of the financial burden among Member States.

The issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must not be forgotten as we think about the twenty-first century. At the 2000 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held this spring, a great step forward towards realizing the elimination of nuclear weapons was made, with unanimous agreement among participating States, including nuclear-weapon States, on practical steps towards nuclear disarmament, including an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Japan, as the only country to have suffered nuclear devastation, earnestly desires that all countries join hands to free the twenty-first century from the fear and danger of nuclear weapons and to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In accordance with that desire, Japan will submit at the Millennium Assembly a new draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons.

In order to ensure that the twenty-first century is a more peaceful century in which each person on earth can be free from fear and want and enjoy lasting prosperity, all countries must work together in cooperation. Strengthening the United Nations is essential in this regard. Based upon this recognition, Japan is resolved to redouble its efforts to more actively fulfil its responsibility and its role in the international community.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Right Honourable Girija Prasad Koirala, Prime Minister of Nepal.

Mr. Koirala (Nepal): I bring the Assembly warm greetings from the Government and people of Nepal and the best wishes of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev.

Since its inception, the United Nations has been working to uphold peace, to promote the rule of law and to foster development. Yet freedom from want and freedom from fear are as distant as ever for many countries. The challenge before the world's leaders today is to bring peace, prosperity and justice to everyone in an interdependent and globalized world.

We in Nepal believe that the United Nations can help achieve our goal. It is this belief that keeps our faith alive in the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, whose ideals of freedom, equality, non-violence and tolerance continue to sustain the hopes of humanity. That Nepal is active in peacekeeping as well as in other work of the Organization is a clear testimony to that abiding faith.

Never before had the imperative of peace been more compelling and prospects of peace so bright as they are today because of the unprecedented human capacity to destroy and to create. All too often we have failed to remove the root causes of conflict, poverty and exclusion. Poverty and conflict often reinforce each other. The current wave of globalization, though holding promise, has widened the disparity between rich and poor and has facilitated the movements of terrorists, criminals, drugs, diseases and pollution. Refugee flows have become alarming due mainly to intra-State conflicts.

It is within our collective capacity to change this. States must exercise the requisite political will and act together to eliminate the threats of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, to control small and light weapons, to prevent conflicts and resolve disputes peacefully, to restore confidence in collective security through robust peacekeeping, to tackle terrorism and crime and, above all, to bring inclusive progress.

Reducing poverty requires sustained growth at home and a favourable external climate. Growth entails investment, which the world community should help poor countries to finance by meeting agreed aid targets, broadening debt relief measures and encouraging foreign investment. Measures must also be put in place to evenly distribute the benefits of globalization, to bridge the digital divide and to open markets in rich countries for the products and labour of poor countries.

Development should be environment- and market-friendly to make it sustainable. The global financial architecture and the global trading regime must be more responsive to the needs of poor countries.

The least developed countries have for far too long remained in the shadow of world attention. The landlocked among them, like Nepal, are the worst off, as they continue to slide down. Their development partners must help them, both with adequate resources to remove their development constraints and with duty-free and quota-free access for their exports. Transit countries should provide better transit facilities to landlocked countries so that they can join the global economic mainstream.

The United Nations needs comprehensive reform in order to rise up to the challenges of the twenty-first century. We must restore an optimal balance between the General Assembly and the Security Council, and strengthen the Economic and Social Council. The Organization must bring about greater coordination among its funds, programmes and activities, as well as with the Bretton Wood institutions and the World Trade Organization. If the Organization is to be effective, Member States must provide it with adequate resources. The Secretary-General's millennium report offers many useful insights to address global problems and reform the Organization.

We share a common humanity and face a shared destiny. States committed to democracy, human rights and good governance that are willing to take bold steps and work with each other, as well as with civil society, can make a difference. People shall judge us by our leadership in promoting peace, prosperity and justice for every man, woman and child around the world. Nepal will do its part.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Right Honourable Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister and Minister for Defence and Public Service of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Mr. Mosisili (Lesotho): We are at an important juncture in human history, a time of reflection on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century — the United Nations in which most of humankind places much faith and hope for a bright future. Can we say with confidence that such faith and hope are justifiably placed? Whatever answer we give to that question, I believe it is within our capability to make it so. There is no doubt that when the United Nations was created, in 1945, the expectations of all peoples of the world were high for an institution that promised an era of peace and security and the betterment of the living conditions of all peoples.

Given the pall of despair that had descended upon the world following a prolonged and brutal war, the human spirit could not but be uplifted by the lofty words and intentions of the Charter of the United Nations:

> "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war",
>
> "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and"
>
> "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

Unfortunately, it was not until 50 years later, in 1994, that institutionalized colour discrimination was defeated in South Africa. In a similar vein, the poor countries of the South, including my own, are yet to see genuine economic emancipation, despite the creation of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund, which are meant to give practical meaning to the lofty aspirations of the United Nations Charter.

The attainment of democracy in sub-Saharan Africa must be accompanied by corresponding economic gains and the reduction of poverty. However, the majority of us who have embraced democracy are yet to reap the fruits of that change. We have waited too long, and change must come now. We are unable to meet the challenges of globalization and to take advantage of the opportunities it offers for development and the relief of poverty. We are similarly unable to take full advantage of the opportunities

presented by advances in information and communications technology, which hold great prospects for our rapid development. The defining challenge of the twenty-first century is how to close the present gap in development between the developed and the developing nations.

The renaissance that the Economic and Social Council has been experiencing in the last three years is very gratifying and must be sustained. Its role in translating our aspirations into reality should be strengthened. It will therefore be necessary in the twenty-first century to rethink the powers of that body so that it is put on a footing commensurate with its importance.

On the eve of the twenty-first century, we must continue to dream of a future filled with hope for humanity. A policy framework that is regaining currency is that of a new global human order whose essential elements are, first, the creation of a new partnership between developing and developed countries, based on full cooperation for their mutual benefit; secondly, the promotion of democratic culture and good governance; thirdly, the adoption of a development strategy that is centred on people as objects of development, and one that is sensitive to issues of equity, gender equality, the rights of indigenous people and the protection of the environment; fourthly, increased productivity and production with equity through the application of science and technology; fifthly, the elimination of the debt burden for developing countries; sixthly, the reduction of extreme poverty; and, lastly, the creation of a global development facility funded by such new and innovative sources of financing as cuts in military spending, levies on pollution and a tax on speculative capital.

Finally, we would like to join all delegations in calling for a United Nations that is strengthened and equipped with resources to wage war against HIV/AIDS.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Right Honourable Percival James Patterson, Prime Minister and Minister of Defense of Jamaica.

Mr. Patterson (Jamaica): The closing decades of the twentieth century have brought mankind to new horizons, extending beyond the nation State to create a wider circle of human identity and building a new sense of global consciousness. In earlier times, philosophers, poets and other visionaries recognized the existence of one human family. It is a concept which our people have grown increasingly to accept.

Photographs from space, showing a single Earth suspended in space, have served dramatically to confirm the sense of one borderless world, giving a powerful stimulus to the spread of this perception of human unity and global oneness. Acknowledgement of this reality must be the starting point of this Assembly as we mark the start of a new millennium.

The establishment of the United Nations was one of the principal achievements of the century and the Charter is unquestionably a landmark document, giving a clear signal in the movement to a wider, global identity. During the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, several important contributions were made to strengthen the capacity of the world community to address the major global issues which confront us. Discussions on reform were launched, but enthusiasm was lacking and inertia triumphed. Reform was subverted into a crusade for downsizing and retrenchment.

And so we embark on the new millennium with a glaring structural deficit: the absence of an organ — comparable in standing and authority, but more representative in its composition — to address major global questions in the economic domain, the social field and the environment of our planet. There remains a yawning gap in the institutions of global governance that we must quickly fill.

As we enter the new millennium, universal global peace and security remain under constant threat because of large-scale and persistent poverty; increasing instability in the world economy; the looming global contest between resources and consumption; and the prospect of poor countries' being obliged to pay for the indulgence of the rich. Poverty remains the single greatest challenge facing mankind. Even as globalization presents new vistas of opportunities, half of the world's peoples suffer the deprivation, despair and powerlessness of extreme poverty.

We must seize this unique moment to forge global partnerships for decisive action against poverty and social exclusion. We live in a fool's paradise to think that the status quo can be indefinitely maintained. The challenges, indeed, are multiplying. The poor have

neither the time nor the interest to discuss the theories of economic globalization. Even as they experience its harsh realities, the globalized media, with a vastly extended reach, now enable the poor to see how the rich actually live. They can observe that, if the roads of the cities of the industrialized world are not paved with gold, they are a gateway to much greater opportunity than their present life offers.

The digital revolution is a demonstrable source of tremendous benefit to mankind. Yet information technology is dangerously poised to become the new barrier — a powerful force of exclusion in the new millennium. Let us exploit the digital revolution for human development in the creation of a global knowledge-based economy. I call for effective and meaningful collaboration among all stakeholders in the international community so that information technology can impact positively on the lives of all our people. There must be no gender disparity in this new revolution. It must embrace our children and youth, the disabled, our rural communities and ethnic minorities.

The challenge that faces this Millennium Assembly is the age-old one that has faced humanity at all turning points in history. Do we ignore the signals of self-destruction or do we heed them and change course? Indisputably, we must respond to them with the spirit of global solidarity that is essential to their fulfilment. To do any less is to fail in our duty to our own and future generations.

And there is no better, more practical, more effective way to start than to endow the United Nations with the capacity and competence to bring that spirit of global solidarity to the fulfilment of the long-stated aims and objectives of the Charter. We must strengthen the United Nations by making it a truly democratic instrument of human progress. Only serious and courageous action, and genuine commitment to changing the status quo, will be worthy of our coming together here in this commemorative Summit. In the new millennium, we must become good stewards for this and succeeding generations. Let us begin now.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Roosevelt Douglas, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign, Legal, Labour and Carib Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Mr. Douglas (Dominica): What makes the start of this new century both fascinating and frightening is the fact that we can only enjoy the benefit of it, cognizant of the fact that none of us here will see the end of it. In short, we will not be present to take credit for the achievements, nor to shoulder the blame for the failures of our policies.

It has been said that the century which we are entering can and must be the century of the common man and common woman. This is very true, as it is the common man who will judge the efficacy of this institution and will pronounce whether or not we were truly successful in fulfilling the promises of the United Nations Charter.

But the bigger question is: should we succeed in leaving the common man a higher standard of living, access to affordable health care, peace and security and good economic prospects, will he be able to enjoy them on the planet that we will leave to him? I ask this question because the truth is, the common man will judge us most of all on the state of the planet that we will bequeath to him and the generations after him.

The indiscriminate destruction of our forests, rampant overfishing of our oceans and the pollution of the air and soil take less time to occur than it will take to repair the damage that has been created. Our concern cannot be overstated since we, the small States, the most vulnerable members of this Assembly, are the ones that will bear the burden of the very real threats of climate change and environmental degradation.

This issue of environmental vulnerability further compounds the economic vulnerability with which we are faced as we enter this new century. Indeed, it is economic security that we need to ensure that we provide for the common man of generations to come. For without economic security, the stability, openness and good governance to which we all aspire will not be attainable.

The viability of this Organization will be called into question if a few members are strong while the majority are weak, feeble, marginalized and powerless. I say this because the majority of the countries in the Caribbean are small, structurally weak, with vulnerable economies that lack the financial and human resources and the institutional capacity necessary to compete in this global economy and to benefit from the trade opportunities which may exist.

My country, Dominica, presently boasts the living reality of the world's two oldest human beings,

Elizabeth Pampo Israel, 125 years old, in Glanvillia, Dominica, and Rose Charles, 119 years old. Both are alive and well in Dominica.

While we are doing our part to become incorporated in this new era of globalization, we have so far been unable to identify any tangible benefits from international agreements such as those that govern the World Trade Organization (WTO). Instead, we have witnessed the erosion of market access and export earnings from bananas. We strongly urge organizations like the WTO to recognize the unique circumstances of small, structurally weak and vulnerable States and to make special provisions for these States in the formulation of their policies and regulations.

The difficulties that my country currently faces with respect to the banana industry, and to agriculture in general, has left us no alternative but to intensify our efforts to diversify the economy, while we stand firm with our banana farmers and move, where possible, into organic farming. The challenges of diversification come at a time when we are losing our valuable human resources to the more advanced wage markets of the North, when the unstoppable process of trade liberalization is forcing us back into traditional markets and, in some countries, when extreme poverty demoralizes the majority of the labour force.

It is very obvious that we cannot afford to let the information technology revolution pass us by. This would not only result in the marginalization of countries like my own but would also put into question the viability and stability of the countries themselves. The information technology revolution has widened the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots", with the "haves" enjoying the good life and the "have nots" floundering in poverty. Despite the opportunities that may exist, we should not forget that well over half of the world's population does not even have access to basic telephone services.

It is the poor, particularly women and children, who are most affected by economic crises, epidemics and natural disasters. We have every reason to be troubled by this, as poverty impedes the contribution that vast numbers of our populations can make towards national development.

The Millennium Report calls for one billion people to be lifted out of poverty by the year 2015. This is laudable. However, many developing countries are unable to fund programmes that eradicate poverty, due to the high burden of external debt which serves as an impediment to sustainable economic development.

We believe that the United Nations can play a vital role in shaping and influencing a new regime of multilateral economic governance among the international lending agencies, urging them to institute policies for debt relief, so as to ensure that the fundamental, underlying causes of indebtedness are eliminated, thereby ensuring that the cycle of poverty itself is broken. Dominica is sparing no effort to upgrade our offshore legislation to reduce, and eliminate any possibilities of money laundering. At the same time, we demand our sovereign rights and are committed to continuing the development of our offshore sector, like other countries in the Caribbean.

Less than two centuries ago, slavery was defeated. Apartheid and fascism were defeated in the last century. It is now our obligation to direct our full energy to entomb racism in this century in all its manifestations. One of the greatest men of the last century, Martin Luther King, said that the arc of the moral universe is long and wide, but it always bends towards justice. Real peace will never come without justice. Dominica is easily one of the most beautiful islands in the world. It is committed to pursue the course of peace; to play its part in seeking a cure for the dreaded AIDS epidemic; to strengthen Caribbean and Latin American cooperation; and to contribute to the strengthening of the unity of all African States and South-South cooperation. Locked in geographically between the French Departments of Guadeloupe and Martinique, with which we share strong historical ties, we have been obliged to seek a new relationship with France and the European Union to ensure our economic viability.

Dominica will always be committed within the family of the United Nations to support the course of peacekeeping and conflict resolution in the world and of sustainable development among the poor nations and the attainment of popular democracy to ensure popular participation and decentralization at all levels of society, and it will respect the right of the Republic of China to adequate representation.

Finally, we salute the bold task being undertaken by our brother, Kofi Annan, and the United Nations in instituting this very timely debate among Member States.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Cheikh El Avia Ould Mohamed Khouna, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

Mr. Ould Mohamed Khouna (Mauritania) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I am particularly pleased and honoured to address you, on behalf of the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Mr. Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, on the occasion of the Millennium Summit organized under the topic of the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century. I would like at this point to extend my warm congratulations to the Co-Chairpersons of this historic Summit, Dr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia and Miss Tarja Halonen, President of the Republic of Finland. We are convinced that their experience and wisdom will guarantee the success of our work.

I would also like to express to Secretary-General Kofi Annan our appreciation for the efforts he has constantly been making since he assumed his duties to strengthen the role of the United Nations and to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities.

Ever since its founding, the United Nations has been making important achievements in the political, economic and social areas, thus responding to the aspirations of peoples and States to freedom, independence and peace. The United Nations and its specialized agencies have, furthermore, played an essential role in promoting sustainable development in all economic, social and environmental spheres.

Be that as it may, the phenomenon of globalization, marking the end of this century, and the magnitude of the challenges facing our world, more than ever require more international cooperation and solidarity to reach equitable and harmonious development.

As Mr. Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, the President of our Republic, said:

> "Today's world, which has become a global village and where distances have been shortened thanks to scientific and technological progress and to the communications and information revolution, must work to correct the imbalance due to the widening gap that separates the rich countries from the poor ones".

Today our world is facing major challenges that are hindering the development process and increasing marginalization and poverty among a large part of humanity. Much of the world's population continues to suffer from the effects of poverty, disease, epidemics and ignorance, as well as those of wars, conflicts and environmental threats such as pollution and desertification. Our collective responsibility in this respect is to ensure that together we meet these challenges in a spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance among all countries and all peoples.

Since indebtedness is one of the major problems facing the developing countries, the international community must find an urgent and radical solution to it so that the available resources can be used for development efforts. Our country welcomes the recent international initiatives taken to this end.

The upheavals experienced by the world and the challenges confronting humankind require a renewal of the methods and structures of our Organization. In this respect, reform and restructuring of its bodies are necessary so that they can be adapted to new realities. To this end we appreciate the initiative taken by the Secretary-General to reform and restructure the Organization.

We also place great hope in the results of the work of the Working Group mandated by the General Assembly to consider expanded representation in the Security Council. We reiterate our support for this idea and for the idea of increasing the number of its permanent members by admitting developing countries and other industrialized countries, in accordance with the rules of democracy, transparency and justice, with a view to ensuring equitable geographical representation in the Council, so that it reflects the universal character of our Organization, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations. We are convinced that these reforms will allow the United Nations to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Before I conclude, I wish to reaffirm the commitment of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to working to achieve the noble ideals of the United Nations, with a view to the promotion and consolidation of international peace and security and the strengthening of cooperation and solidarity among nations in order to bring about a better world free of war, famine and underdevelopment.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Sir James

Fitz-Allen Mitchell, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Sir James Fitz-Allen Mitchell (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): The history of our civilization has been an evolving relationship between the organic and the inorganic. It has evolved with intimate relationships between all living creatures and the planet Earth, which we inherited.

This intimate relationship among living beings created the concepts and the values of family, home and nation. Over thousands of years, national boundaries became demarcated. Rivalries regarding these boundaries and the exploitation of resources led to wars, and then to the search for peace, which gave rise to the founding of the United Nations.

Our religious heritage has taught us how to reach across the boundaries of nations through the very inspirational guideline, "Love your neighbour as yourself." Today we are sensitive to the imperatives of the global village, and our neighbours, through the technological revolution, are everywhere. And yet the competition among the peoples of the world has become fiercer, with the rich countries surging ahead and widening the gap between them and poor countries. Having access to the markets in the developed countries is the key to long-term economic development for the poor countries.

Small island States such as our own, with an enviable record of good governance and human rights, have seen the mighty in the banana trade using the international rules — crafted by them — impede our economic growth. Similarly, the verdicts that have been imposed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries on our financial services, without our having the right to be heard, demonstrate total disrespect. So-called harmful taxation, so-called harmful tax competition is about whose treasury collects the taxes. Where is the fairness in free trade in all of this?

Offshore financial services is one of our chosen avenues of economic diversification. Since it appears as though there is no place or space for us in the production of goods, we thought that we should provide a financial service to those who do produce goods. Our decision to service the wealth generated elsewhere is part of our attempt at economic survival.

We recognize that our financial system must provide opportunities for the enjoyment of the fruits of one's labour. However, we want it to be understood that we are committed to being responsible members of the international community, including playing our part in the war against the drug trade and money-laundering.

Each successive generation of youth must be provided with a ray of hope, and in the twenty-first century our world's leaders must provide meaningful change to enhance the quality of life for all the world's people. Development, no matter what we build, is about people and the quality of their lives. Only when this objective is realized will globalization be accepted as a practical policy of creating equity of opportunities for human development.

The challenges of the twenty-first century lie in the battles against poverty and the HIV virus. The development of human capital is the main priority for small nation-States such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The United Nations must find a way to focus continually on the equitable distribution of the world's wealth. The unilateral imposition of the will of the strong and the wealthy on the small, vulnerable and poor will not produce the stability, security and peace that are fundamental to attaining the quality of life to which we all aspire.

This should be the guiding spirit behind our reform. With this spirit, we should preserve humanity well into the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mart Laar, Prime Minster of Estonia.

Mr. Laar (Estonia): Despite the fact that the United Nations has indeed achieved a lot over the past 55 years, the Organization has not always lived up to the expectations the world had when it was first founded. This uneven record is also described in the Secretary-General's report. Let me give an example of the differences between the high expectations and the reality. In 1972, freedom fighters in the then occupied Estonia wrote an appeal to the United Nations. They considered the United Nations to be an unquestioned moral authority. In the real world, they ended up in the prison camps of the USSR without any notice from this high body. The USSR happened to be a big Power. The

United Nations of the new millennium must make changes.

To achieve that important goal, the decision-making and financial procedures of the United Nations have to be adapted, and the Organization must be streamlined. We need a United Nations that will be an effective, accountable and representative organization that represents us all, large and small countries, equally. But this has another side as well: Member States themselves must be willing to pitch in. It is not enough to demand that the United Nations do something; we have to provide it with the necessary tools to do its work. That means that we must lead by example. Let me focus on three points that we in Estonia consider important. First, open government and open markets are a precondition for economic recovery and growth. Secondly, the information technology sector is a vital conduit to successful development. And thirdly, no country can allow itself to take advantage of a discount on security.

On the first point, the Secretary-General's report to the Assembly (A/54/2000) focused on the eradication of poverty and on making the world a more equal place. This is important. It can be achieved by alleviating debt and by providing more development assistance. I think both of those aspects are vital. However, what is crucial is that States Members of the United Nations should commit themselves to good governance and open markets. Without a commitment to these two elements, no amount of aid and no amount of debt relief will achieve that aim, an aim we all have to strive for.

I am convinced that small countries, such as Estonia, can provide an important example of how to manage economic restructuring. We have been able to show that opening up our markets to outside competition, cutting and indeed eliminating tariffs, privatizing our economy and making the Government accountable to the people bring tangible benefits. The United Nations Development Programme has provided perhaps the best illustration of the effectiveness of our approach. In two years, Estonia has moved 30 places up in the Human Development Index and we belong today to the group of countries that evince high human development.

Secondly, in his report, the Secretary-General highlighted the need to ensure that the benefits of new technology, especially information technology, become available to all. The high-level panel of experts on information and communication technology has called for Internet access for all of the world's population by the end of 2004. That is an ambitious goal and certainly not an easy task, but it is doable. The Internet may not be a cure for all ills; indeed we have to be very careful not to overestimate the importance of the Internet or to underestimate its shortcomings. However, a prerequisite for the spread of the Internet and of the World Wide Web is total and unfettered access. Yet action to ensure this opportunity is less and less global in scale: local action is called for, mostly in the hands of national Governments. Those that embrace openness are also able to enhance the opportunity of their citizens to reach out to qualitatively new horizons.

We have committed ourselves to promoting information technology through a nationwide programme guaranteeing each and every schoolgirl and schoolboy in Estonia free access to the Internet. Today, the Estonian Government carries out its sessions via computer, and Estonia has risen to be among the 20 most computerized nations in the world. But this not enough. Equal distribution of money and information alone does not guarantee well-being. We have to secure an environment where it can be enjoyed. The next and decisive move for mankind is to invest in ecological technologies that allow us to live in partnership with nature.

We know how difficult it is to start such a programme with limited resources. But we also know what benefits can be gained from it. That is why Estonia is committed to work together with the United Nations to assist other Member States to create new opportunities for themselves and for the world as a whole.

Thirdly, just as we in Estonia have come to understand that we must transmit some of the know-how we have gained to other United Nations Members, we have also reached the position that we cannot live on discounted security. That is why the Estonian Government decided this year to give up the 80 per cent discount that we have used so far and to pay our contribution to peacekeeping in full. It is important that if we expect the United Nations to perform ever more, and more complicated, tasks, we must also be willing to foot the bill. Naturally Estonia's contribution in itself is not much in dollar terms. However, if every Member of the United Nations paid its assessed dues in full we would make a considerable step forward.

But paying our dues is not enough, of course. The peacekeeping system of the United Nations has to be made more effective and better adapted to the challenges of today, as mentioned in the recent report on peacekeeping (A/55/305). As we have all seen, the term "peacekeeping" itself is no longer appropriate at a time when what is needed more than keeping the peace is establishing a peaceful environment. Whether this task be delegated to other organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or whether it be the United Nations itself that carries out these tasks, we have to be able to face the new challenges of the new millennium in the peacekeeping field as well. Estonia favours giving the United Nations a stronger mandate to establish and preserve the peace.

I hope we all will consider it our main duty to help the renewed United Nations to make a difference in the new millennium.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Adolf Ogi, President of the Swiss Confederation.

President Ogi (*spoke in French*): Time did not stop with the end of the cold war. History continues. As we embark on a new millennium, we are writing a new page in our history. This is an opportunity to go forward and to make progress. We must seize that opportunity.

The twentieth century was one of great scientific, technological, economic and cultural discoveries. But the twentieth century was also one of conflict and human tragedy of the most violent, the most murderous and the most horrendous kind. Yes, we are embarking on a new century and a new millennium. But what we bequeath to future generations will depend on our common will. If we lack that will, what will our legacy be?

Switzerland shares the objectives of Secretary-General Kofi Annan's millennium report. We thank him for his vision and commitment. Switzerland is with him. Switzerland has the same values as the United Nations — peace, stability, democracy and the observance of human rights. This is why Switzerland intends to enhance its relations with the United Nations.

Switzerland hosts in Geneva a major headquarters of the United Nations system. It is a member of most of the organizations of the system, and contributes generously to the United Nations budget, but today it has only observer status in the General Assembly — though peace, security and well-being are the business of all. The Swiss people will decide about joining the United Nations in 2002.

Despite all our hopes, wars and violence are still with us. But within a century the face of war has changed. Wars take place less frequently between States, but increasingly within States. The participants, their objectives and these conflicts are of a new type. The conflicts are most often of a local nature and inter-ethnic, or simply the work of terrorists.

Nonetheless, these conflicts can destabilize entire countries. Their consequences are felt across borders. They have a lasting impact on the people and their attitudes. It has become more difficult to ensure respect for international humanitarian law, because the actors in conflicts are no longer just States.

We cannot remain passive in the face of this suffering and these tragedies. Unfortunately, traditional international law is no longer sufficient. We must explore new approaches and develop new tools — and perhaps also new structures within the United Nations.

During and after the conflicts, after the terror and intolerance have come to an end, we must seek out and punish the guilty. This is why I salute the efforts to set up the International Criminal Court as soon as possible and to ensure its integrity.

But we must also heal the wounds left by history. In this regard, the Republic of South Africa has given an excellent example with its Truth and Reconciliation Commission, chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. I hope this example will be followed elsewhere in the world.

Human security also requires fighting against poverty and inequalities. This is one of our priorities, because the fruits of globalization must benefit the whole of humankind. The United Nations is called upon to play a key role so that this objective can be achieved. It is the only international organization with a truly global perspective on today's problems: economic and social development, environmental and health issues, new technologies, and the promotion of democracy and human rights. Switzerland wants to take up this challenge with the Member States. In this spirit, we support the idea of holding in Geneva a

summit on the new information and communications technologies.

However, the resolutions passed at such occasions are one thing; they also need to be implemented. The history of the United Nations shows this. Should we not also envisage new structures that could take binding decisions and be charged with seeing that they are carried out? I am thinking of a structure akin to the Security Council, but for issues of civil society. The States must explore new approaches to meeting the challenges of today and tomorrow, together — that is, collectively. This is an opportunity that we must seize.

It is in this spirit that Switzerland, before this Assembly, announces: "We and Geneva are ready to seek solutions with your countries, with the United Nations and with you."

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Mr. Lengsavad (*Lao People's Democratic Republic*) (*spoke in Laotian, English text provided by the delegation*): At the dawn of the new millennium our world is facing both challenges and favourable opportunities. In the past half century, the world has recorded unprecedented economic achievements, thanks to the rapid advance of science and technology. As a result, many countries have now attained a high level of development. However, unfortunately the gap between the developed and developing countries is further widening. While the living standard in some countries has improved, almost half of the world's population still lives in extreme poverty. In this respect, we hope that the developed and more fortunate countries will seriously implement the United Nations Millennium Declaration to help the least-developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and small island developing States rid themselves of poverty. The Lao Government has given priority to poverty eradication by integrating it into the national policy and programme.

The issue of heavy indebtedness has become one of the obstacles to economic development in developing countries. Therefore, a solution to the debt problem in various forms, particularly for the least-developed countries, is necessary if they are to acquire basic resources for building national economic foundations for achieving self-sufficiency in the long run.

Another issue of concern to the majority of countries in the world, particularly weak nations, is the concept of "humanitarian intervention". This concept could quite easily become a cover for gratuitous interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States. Therefore, we are of the view that at the turn of the new millennium it is imperative that all general principles of international law and of the United Nations Charter — in particular, the principles of the sovereign equality of all Member States, respect for the national sovereignty of independent States and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States — be strictly observed.

Mr. Tuomioja (Finland) took the Chair.

Building a prosperous, more secure and equitable twenty-first century is a task that requires the will and determined efforts of the entire world community. In this process, the United Nations has a crucial role to play. Therefore, it is imperative to reform the United Nations, in particular its Security Council, so that it might gain legitimacy, be more transparent and be in a much better position to carry out its responsibilities. On Security Council reform we maintain our firm position in favour of the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Council, adding seats for both developing and industrialized countries. No less important, let us also resolve to ensure that the United Nations is given the necessary resources so that it can live up to its enormous tasks in development assistance.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic will, together with all peoples all over the world, take appropriate action to prove its commitment. In this spirit, I wish the Summit a successful conclusion.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Monie Captan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia.

Mr. Captan (Liberia): On the occasion of this Millennium Summit, I am honoured to participate in this historic session on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Charles G. Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia.

Permit me to congratulate our Co-Chairpersons for their selection to chair this Millennium Summit.

I wish to also salute and extend deepest thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General on this historic occasion for his efforts in the search for international peace and understanding.

This Millennium Summit cannot and should not follow the traditional pleasantries of congratulations and self-indulgence so characteristic of high profile meetings of this sort. Rather, this Summit should be a forum for the members of the international community to express their concerns as sovereign equals in the finest tradition of the universal values of equity, social justice, freedom and equality.

If we should, in that process, offend others in our common community because we proclaim our rights as well as the responsibility we assume, then we do so without regret. We Liberians, like the rest of you, joined the United Nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples. By equal rights, we pronounced the equality of cultural identity in a diverse world. We did not view equality in a context of numerical ratios, but by the intrinsic equality of the worth of human beings and the right to self-determination consistent with the cultural identity and the value of a free people; a people free of the imposition of a perceived superior moral value system, one based upon the narrow view of moral superiority and ethnocentrism.

In essence, we advocate the coexistence of cultural diversity based upon the principle of the right of self-determination. This cultural identity is embodied in the legal context of the modern nation-State; an entity that is disparate in geographical size, population, wealth, power and resources, but equal in the right of a people to determine their fate.

Today, there is the disparity of bigness; bigness as it relates to wealth, technology and military power; a bigness so overwhelming that its wealth, technological advancement and military strength could, with ease, reduce poverty, eradicate disease, educate youths, provide basic social services, combat AIDS and malaria, care for refugees and provide security. Yet, this bigness has been used to sustain disparities between the North and the South. Some have argued that the poor must learn to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, while others have urged the North to assist the South because the creation of viable markets will serve the self-interest of the North. Yet, any realist would easily tell you that no nation guided by the principle of competition would shun disparities.

However, the South is so small compared to the bigness of the North. The disparities are exponential. Removing the disparities, even if willed, would indeed require a miracle. What options exist? The first step could be to end the debt burden, the bondage of the poor to the wealthy; a debt burden acquired out of loans given in the pursuit of influence in the cold war, and not in the interest of the borrower; a debt burden that has denied little children food, education, health care and jobs for their parents. The debt burden is a bondage that will continue to stifle the welfare of the South into the new millennium. We must, however, commend those few States that have cancelled the debts of the least developed States.

We must also intercede for the transfer of technology. The bold steps of humanity in the sphere of research were intended to liberate all of humanity from its backwardness. It was never intended to benefit only a few or to separate humanity. Why are Nobel laureates honoured? Is it not because of their dedicated services to humanity? A technology that liberates only the North and not the South is indeed a mixed blessing; it is a gun that has been used to both liberate and kill. Are we condemned to be raw material suppliers in the new millennium? Suppliers of goods, the prices of which are determined by the buyers and not the sellers? Shall we continue to remain in a position where we cannot afford essential technology in the fields of medicine and agriculture? We call not for the erasure of the disparities created by the buyers of the North, but to have access at the baseline, to engage in more equitable terms of trade.

Bigness is further expressed in the information exchange between the North and South. The Western press, with its domination of satellite transmission of information and access to the Internet, can through sheer exposure destroy small States incapable of mustering the resources to respond to a global public relations campaign. The depiction of other cultures of small States is prejudiced by stereotypical portrayals of a hopeless southern hemisphere; a hemisphere prejudiced by the lack of understanding and information, racism and ethnocentrism. The bigness of the Western media and its impact on small States, on different cultures, is so profound that it threatens their very existence and welfare. And yet, because of their powerful influence, Governments succumb to them,

rather than regulate them; sometimes even using them as instruments of their foreign policy.

Who do we raise these concerns with today? Who shall guarantee the conditions upon which we collectively agreed to associate as a community of universal norms? What is the fate of our community in this post-cold-war unipolar system? Should we be guarded by the words of the United States scholar George F. Kennan, when he wrote in 1948 that:

> "We have 50 per cent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 per cent of its population ... In this situation we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships that will allow us to maintain this position of disparity ... We should cease to talk about the raising of the living standards and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts."

Likewise, in 1996 at the United States Democratic National Convention, James Rubin said,

> "The United Nations can only do what the United States will let it do."

Perhaps the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, did take a cue when he asked the question:

> "How can we ask nations to accept democratic practice within their borders if they see no hope for democracy among nations?"

Or shall we be optimistic at the new wave of humanism characterized by a global coalition for the protection of human rights? Optimism must be based upon sincerity. Immanuel Kant would insist that the moral imperative must be categorical and not hypothetical. Our actions cannot be predicated by mere expediency in the calculation of accrued benefit; rather, our actions must be done because we perceive and know them to be right.

At this juncture, this new millennium, we must defend and preserve the universal truths to which we have committed our common association. Truths are simple and self-evident. If we must succeed in preserving the integrity of the United Nations, then we must reject the inequitable representation of the world's people as reflected by the present structure of the Security Council; reject the undemocratic processes of decision-making in the Security Council; and reject the continuous violation of the United Nations Charter by the powerful. If we fail to make these rejections a reality in this millennium, then let us agree that all the talk of moral imperatives and human rights is but mere political expediency.

Nevertheless, we the free people of the world will always insist, as the American jurist Learned Hand did, that:

> "Right knows no boundaries, and justice no frontiers; the brotherhood of man is not a domestic institution."

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now head an address by His Excellency Mr. Charles Gomis, Minister for External Relations of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Gomis (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to commend the excellent idea of having this important Millennium Summit co-chaired by the representatives of two countries, friends of Côte d'Ivoire, Namibia and Finland, which play a decisive role in the fight for the implementation and the respect of the fundamental principles of the United Nations.

I wish to assure them of the full support of the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire.

I also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the United Nations Secretary-General for his brilliant report, which will enable us to conduct a fruitful reflection aimed at rendering our Organization better able to respond to peoples' expectations.

In appointing me to represent him at this Millennium Summit, the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, General Robert Guéi, asked me to say from this rostrum how sorry he was to be unable to be present, being detained by preparations for October's elections.

Under these solemn circumstances, I wish to express on behalf of its Government and people Côte d'Ivoire's attachment to the universal principles of the United Nations Charter and its desire to contribute to strengthening them.

We are witnessing an extraordinary acceleration in the world's development. Peoples are demanding greater well-being, happiness and, above all, freedom. In that spirit, the developing countries in general, and

those of Africa in particular, wish to see this Summit make resolute commitments to the eradication of poverty, the right to development and the flourishing of the human person.

That is why we welcome the importance given to the situation in Africa in the Secretary-General's report. We sincerely hope that the appeal on behalf of the African continent will be favourably received by the international community. My country is one of those which are convinced that most of the problems of the developing countries are due to poverty and destitution. In areas as important as agriculture, education, health and training, these countries face obstacles which impede their development. To these are added the difficulties of exploiting and managing their immense natural resources, because they lack the necessary techniques and technology, and, above all, because they have little weight in decision-making in finance and international trade.

How, then, can we explain the fact that countries with potential of all types are languishing in misery and ignorance while others lacking such resources are living in abundance? We believe that a just and equitable management of world affairs, supported by dynamic and active solidarity, would contribute to reducing the gap between the rich and the poor countries.

At this beginning of the third millennium, the United Nations must cease being purely an administrative institution and become a centre of morality and justice where all the nations of the world feel at home, developing a common conscience by being a family of nations. The United Nations of the twenty-first century has the historic duty of encouraging this qualitative step of active solidarity, not only as an effective centre for mediation, but also by promoting values, attitudes and specific initiatives of solidarity capable of improving inter-State relations.

Our shared Organization must therefore promote and encourage the political will for the ideas in the Secretary-General's report to be quickly implemented on the ground. But, for the United Nations to be truly effective, it must have the means to meet the many challenges which it faces.

This is the model of the United Nations that we must reassert and bring about, adapting it as necessary to take account of the changes which have occurred since its establishment in particular the access of so many new peoples to the experience of freedom, and their legitimate aspiration to be present, and to carry more weight on the international scene.

By committing ourselves in that way, we will be able to overcome the problems which assail us, whether they concern respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter, reform of the Security Council, globalization, peacekeeping operations, good governance, debt, the environment, the advancement of women, human rights or the AIDS pandemic, to mention but a few.

The time has come for a new experience; we are invited to guarantee the future of the women and men of the twenty-first century.

Before concluding, I wish to take this opportunity to recall that following the change which occurred on 24 December 1999 Côte d'Ivoire now has a new Constitution, broadly inspired by the fundamental values and principles of the Charter. This new Constitution, we are convinced, will permit considerable progress in democracy in our country. The general elections to be held soon will mark the return to a civilian regime and democratic normality.

We sincerely thank friendly countries and the United Nations, as well as its institutions and specialized agencies, for their significant assistance in the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency the Honourable Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. Kikwete (United Republic of Tanzania): I apologize on behalf of my President for his absence from this historic event. He would have liked to be here, but he could not be present because of unavoidable national commitments.

Tanzania considers this Summit to be the new foundation for a renewed international commitment to the ideals, promise and vision of a twenty-first century United Nations. In its 55 years' existence, the United Nations has lived its mission and vision. Our Organization was created essentially for the maintenance of world peace and security. It is remarkable that since the end of the Second World War the world has not experienced another world war, and hopefully it never will again. The United Nations has

been able to intervene and resolve a number of wars and conflicts which have threatened global and regional, as well as individual nations', peace and security. I wonder what the situation of the world would have been without the United Nations.

While the United Nations has scored noticeable success in the area of peace and security, much more work needs to be done in the field of the prevention and resolution of conflicts and wars. The existence of huge arsenals of nuclear weapons poses a major potential threat to world peace and security. This has to be eliminated for the sake of humanity. The United Nations also needs to deal with the problem of the illicit traffic and proliferation of small arms. Tanzania is of the view that for greater success and effectiveness in dealing with conflicts, the United Nations needs to work in close collaboration with regional mechanisms and initiatives.

The promotion of human rights, as well as social and economic development among nations and peoples of the world, was another important objective of the United Nations. Today, apart from a few enclaves of Non-Self-Governing Territories, the world is virtually free from classical colonialism, and this is one of the achievements of the United Nations. The United Nations also has to continue the promotion of, and advocacy for, the observance of fundamental human rights, as it has done over the years. We believe that respect for human rights forms a firm basis for peace, security and development in societies and nations.

There is a need for the United Nations to be more involved in matters relating to social and economic development. Tackling the problems of poverty, especially in Africa and the least developed countries, needs to be given top priority. Perhaps nowhere is the problem more compelling than in Africa, where 33 of the 48 poorest countries in the world are located. It is no accident that the overriding development objective of Africa remains the eradication of poverty, ignorance and disease.

The United Nations urgently needs to do much more in combating HIV/AIDS in Africa. Otherwise, untold misery is bound to result.

The United Nations has always been a good advocate for the poor and the weak in their quest for meaningful development. We recall the numerous initiatives made by the United Nations in attempting to create a new international economic order and make the international community respond positively to the plight of the poor. Our Organization has to do that more forcefully now than ever before because of the obvious challenges ahead of us. There were expectations that globalization and liberalization would lead to increased growth and development, but they have yet to produce tangible results for developing countries. It is recognized that there are opportunities in globalization and liberalization, but the majority of the developing countries are still marginalized because of their weakness, as well as the lack of an international environment conducive to development.

The specific challenges facing developing countries in this regard deserve special attention. The United Nations must help promote measures that would encourage increased technical assistance and a greater flow of resources and investment from developed to developing countries.

There is also an urgent need for the United Nations to help with comprehensive debt relief measures, particularly for the least developed countries. We welcome the awareness of the international community of the need to address this issue.

Furthermore, we expect the United Nations to continue to call upon the developed countries to provide unhindered market access for goods from developing countries, as well as to make technology available to developing countries on a concessional and grant basis.

The United Nations is as relevant today as it was 55 years ago. The world still needs the United Nations, but for the United Nations to perform its mission and realize its vision, it has to be strengthened in its structure and resources. There is a need, therefore, to address the serious financial problems affecting the United Nations budget and the financing of the United Nations development programmes. In this regard, I take this opportunity to call upon Member States to pay their contributions to the United Nations in a timely fashion, without any conditionalities.

In conclusion, it is our view that the reform of the Security Council is long overdue. The Council's continued legitimacy demands that it be urgently democratized through the equitable representation of developing countries in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. We also share the view that the expansion of the Council should include

both developed and developing countries. I believe that that would make the United Nations truly our Organization. At present, it leaves much to be desired; there is much that needs to be done if we are to have an Organization that we can truly say belongs to all of us.

I wanted to share those few thoughts as part of this important millennium meeting of the United Nations at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Antoine Kolawolé Idji, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Benin.

Mr. Idji (Benin) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to pay tribute to the memory of the international staff members who recently perished in West Timor in the service of the mission entrusted to them by the international community.

The fact that our work is being guided by two eminent personalities from Africa and Europe attests, in a symbolic fashion, to the international community's support for the idea that there is a need to pool our efforts to define a shared vision of our common destiny and to commit ourselves to a compact of solidarity. That is why I should like to pay a well-deserved tribute to Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of our Organization, and to congratulate him on the report that he submitted for our consideration, entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century". His judicious and clear-sighted analysis, as well as his well-founded recommendations, once again bear witness to his commitment and aspiration to make the Organization an effective instrument, commensurate with our aspirations, that can meet the challenges confronting our peoples.

More than 50 years after the creation of the United Nations — and thanks to its actions — the world can be proud of having spared itself a repetition of the conflicts on the scale of those that characterized the first half of the twenty-first century. However, paradoxically, it has not been able to protect itself from the advent of an even more terrifying threat: the potential for mass destruction, acquired by certain countries, which is capable of wiping out all of humanity and our shared home, the earth.

The United Nations has also done significant work to emancipate peoples from the colonial yoke, and today the international community can legitimately welcome that. However, the Organization's initiatives to support the majority of these countries that are new to the international scene are still very flimsy and have experienced vicissitudes, often disappointing the hopes that they had inspired.

Since 1997, the Organization has been undertaking an internal process of reform required by the new global context so as to make it more capable of meeting these new challenges. The initial results of this arduous and painstaking process are encouraging and reaffirm the need to continue.

We shall not repeat what the Secretary-General has already said so well in his report. We shall limit our remarks to the role that the people of Benin hope to see the United Nations play in the twenty-first century. The United Nations has always been viewed by our people as the most appropriate and promising instrument for setting out the major guidelines for building a human community that is prosperous and safe. But beyond that legitimate concern, the men and women of Benin are rightly asking questions about the form that safeguarding peace and security in the world will take, and about development and the specific signs of cooperation and solidarity that will make it possible to raise their standard of living and to achieve what we in Benin call the minimum shared social living standard — that is, access for every human being, wherever he or she may be on our planet, to food, housing, clothing, medical attention, education and useful economic work for society in an environment conducive to income-producing activity. These, to be sure, are objectives to which the United Nations, since its inception, has dedicated considerable resources through numerous initiatives.

It must be recognized, however, that as of now all of the plans and programmes drawn up over more than 50 years have not been able to reduce poverty, much less to stimulate genuine development in those countries that we continue, with such old-fashioned modesty, to call "developing countries".

Even more than in the past, the credibility of the Organization henceforth will be measured in terms of its capacity to place human beings and the protection of human dignity at the centre of its activities.

There is a need to act rapidly to remedy the negative impacts of the globalization of the economy and of communications, and a need to fill the huge and unjust gap that has developed between those who have

access to the potential that technological progress is making available and those who are deprived of or excluded from it.

The economy and means of communication are now globalized, but what is now needed is to globalize development by mobilizing the international community to shoulder shared but differentiated responsibility and by effectively creating improved socio-economic conditions likely to promote the full flourishing of the human being.

We have a historic responsibility to update and extend the vision of the founding fathers of our universal Organization.

Once again, we must be capable of imagination and vision and must give thought to posterity.

In this context, we believe that in the twenty-first century the United Nations should base its action on collective responsibility; the right to equally shared development and progress; and the universally accepted duty of solidarity. The enjoyment of these three fundamental values by the citizens of the world requires the strengthening of genuine partnership between the three protagonists of international life, namely, Governments, civil society and the private sector.

It is at this price that the imperative needs of democracy, the primacy of law and good governance will be advanced and consolidated at the national, regional and international level.

I conclude by referring to the symbol of the pierced jar, taken from the history of Benin in the nineteenth century.

King Guezo, who reigned in Abomey from 1818 to 1858, faced with the difficulties inherent in his position, bequeathed us these prophetic words, which today have inspired many mottos: "If all the sons of the Kingdom were to come and with all their hands together stop up the holes of the pierced jar, the country would be saved."

The people of Benin have resorted to the symbolism of the pierced jar each time it has found itself at a crossroads, faced with the challenges and the problems of its destiny.

The conference of vital forces of the nation, held in Cotonou from 19 to 28 February 1990, where representatives of all regions of the country and all sectors of national life were together at a time when great dangers were threatening our very existence, is a recent and historic illustration of that.

The contribution of Benin to defining the new vision of the United Nations for the twenty-first century could be formulated around this symbol, which calls for solidarity, tolerance, sharing, commitment, social progress and development, all of them values that sum up my thoughts here and that are all to be found in those famous words bequeathed to posterity by King Guezo.

It is on these various pillars that renewed United Nations action must be based. On behalf of my delegation, I ask all the inhabitants of the planet earth to support that jar, which today symbolizes our world, so that it will never break into pieces in our hands, which must protect it for the generations to come.

Long live the renewed United Nations so that, throughout this millennium, the planet earth, which we have been given to share, will know peace and prosperity.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Jeremiah Manele, Chairman of the delegation of Solomon Islands.

Mr. Manele (Solomon Islands): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, The Honourable Manasseh Sogavare.

The maintenance of international peace and security must remain a major role for the United Nations in the twenty-first century. The world entered the new millennium with increasing conflicts, in particular internal conflicts and wars. My country has fallen victim to this trend. The crisis of the past 20 months has tested the solidarity, security and stability of our young country. It has exposed the real challenges of ethnic differences that exist and can persist in a culturally rich and diverse society such as ours. To resolve the crisis, my Government has launched a National Peace Plan and a Programme of Action aimed at achieving a peaceful solution to the unrest through meaningful dialogue and discussion and at developing the country on the basis of a number of principles, including the rule of law; equitable sharing and active participation by our people in the sustainable development of our national resources; respect for human rights; promotion of and respect for

our different cultural traditions; and a gender-balanced approach to education and employment.

A ceasefire agreement was signed by the conflicting parties on 3 August 2000. The agreement provides a conducive environment for peace talks to proceed. Preliminary peace negotiations have been undertaken, and the actual peace talks are currently under way. My Government is therefore firmly committed to ensuring peace and security for all our citizens, foreign friends and visitors. We are equally determined to rebuild our economy and welcome those who wish to assist in this endeavour. In this regard, may I call on our development partners to adopt a more positive attitude towards my Government's genuine attempts to restore law and order, thus ensuring peace, security, and stability. During this difficult period, Solomon Islands, where appropriate, needs your assistance.

While access to information technology could be the most rapid means to utilize the benefits of globalization and to reduce the development gap between developed and developing countries, for least developed countries the process must begin with infrastructure development. Of particular importance is the development of a reliable and efficient energy sector. Without electricity, access to information and communication technology will remain a distant possibility for our rural communities. The need for intellectual capacity to harness the opportunities of the information age is a key prerequisite for closing the digital divide. Education, including the eradication of illiteracy, therefore remains a priority for Solomon Islands.

Solomon Islands joins those who spoke earlier in stressing the importance of sustaining the future of our planet. Agenda 21 and the related international programmes of action and conventions remain valid blueprints for sustainable development and environmental management in the twenty-first century. We fully endorse the Secretary-General's recommendations on how to address the issues of climate change and environmental degradation, including marine pollution. We must not take for granted the concerns and needs of the most vulnerable Members of our Organization, the small island developing States.

Only a reformed, inclusive and universal United Nations can effectively shoulder the major responsibilities placed on it. Flexibility and greater understanding should be demonstrated towards those who wish to participate in the work and activities of our Organization. The Republic of China on Taiwan is a case in point. As well, those Member States that are capable and prepared to play a greater role in the Security Council, including Germany and Japan, should be accorded permanent membership. Concrete efforts should now be made on reaching agreement on the outstanding issues of Security Council reform.

Finally, we have just parted from a century of sorrow that saw two World Wars, one of which affected our islands, and countless other conflicts causing sorrow and suffering — a century defined by a culture of violence and intolerance. As we begin the twenty-first century, let us work towards making it a century of harmony, a century defined by a culture of peace and tolerance, dialogue and discussion, and prosperity for all of humanity.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Claude Morel, Chairman of the delegation of Seychelles.

Mr. Morel (Seychelles): My delegation congratulates the Co-Chairpersons for their dynamic stewardship of this auspicious and historic Summit meeting of the United Nations. Our felicitations also go to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for the commendable report before us, and for initiating reform measures to revitalize the United Nations system as we embrace the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Revitalizing the United Nations would require providing it with the effective instruments needed to pursue its noble objectives. This entails ensuring that it is endowed with the required resources to carry out its mandates, in particular those of promoting economic and social progress. This also entails reinforcing the present mechanisms in place for the maintenance of international peace, security and disarmament, including the United Nations role in peace-making and peacekeeping activities. It also entails strengthening its vocation as an indispensable instrument for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

The reform process would be inadequate if the transformation of the Security Council into a democratic and representative organ reflecting both its universal character and present-day realities were not achieved. After seven years of debate, it is of

imperative necessity to bridge positions and make progress.

Equally important for my delegation is that the reform process should encompass the enhancement of the General Assembly as the supreme policy-making organ of the United Nations. It is only through the reinforcement of its role and mandate that the international community can successfully tackle some of the most pressing issues facing humanity, not least of which is the process of globalization.

Globalization has provided many countries, especially the strong economies of the North, with unprecedented opportunities and benefits. However, it has also accentuated the North-South divide, and has exposed the smaller and most vulnerable economies to marginalization. My delegation believes that the key to redressing the unequal impact of globalization is to strengthen multilateral action and reinforce the United Nations system in its commitment to international cooperation for development.

In this regard, my delegation holds the view that there should be even closer collaboration and coordination between the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization in addressing the crucial question of development. Next year's United Nations conference on financing for development will be a test case for international solidarity. It is my delegation's hope that the conference will result in a new, genuine and meaningful global partnership for development.

That partnership should be extended to the area of international trade, since in the long term we developing countries can only finance our development needs by gaining greater market access and better prices for our exports. Of critical importance to us is the need for the extension of trade preferences for a longer period of time, in order to facilitate our integration into the international trading system and ensure that we can also be the beneficiaries of globalization, not its victims.

The post-cold-war period has not delivered the promised peace dividend. The hopes and expectations of the developing world, as raised by the United Nations global conferences of the past decade, have not been met. Instead, we have witnessed a weakening of the commitment of the countries of the North to support development. More than ever before, we are today living in an interdependent world. The developed nations therefore have a responsibility to engage with us so as to deal with the major global, economic, social and environmental challenges of our time on the basis of understanding and genuine partnership among equals.

That responsibility should include, inter alia, accepting the vulnerabilities and special needs of small island developing States and fully implementing the Barbados Programme of Action and the decisions of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly; accepting that the per capita gross domestic product of small island developing States should not be the major criterion in assessing their development needs; accepting that climate change is a direct consequence of unsustainable development policies of the North; accepting that the debt and debt-servicing burden of countries of the South is a principal cause of economic stagnation and underdevelopment; accepting that there is a need to elaborate a comprehensive strategy to promote increased access to science and technology by developing nations; and accepting that it is unjust for a small percentage of humanity to consume an overwhelming share of the world's resources.

The evolution in international relations has brought about new realities in the global order. The Millennium Summit is therefore a timely occasion for the entire membership of the United Nations to reflect upon the articulation of our vision and aspirations of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, and to elaborate fresh approaches to deal with the challenges of our time. The United Nations is not a perfect institution. But it is the only institution that represents the collective conscience of humanity. It remains our greatest hope for justice, peace, security and development. It remains our only hope for a more compassionate world.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an Address by His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid, Chairman of the delegation of Morocco.

Prince Moulay Rachid (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the great honour to convey to the members of the Assembly the greetings and high esteem of His Majesty Mohammed VI, King of Morocco. He has asked me to communicate on his behalf the royal message, which he should have liked

to deliver personally before this Millennium Summit, given the special interest he attaches to it.

Following is the text of the royal message:

"At the outset, on this rare and extraordinary occasion, I wish to thank all of those who have contributed to organizing this Millennium Summit. I should like in particular to congratulate the Secretary-General, who has convened this Summit so that, together, we may take stock of the world situation in the context of an ambitious and bold vision for the future of humanity.

"During the century that is now ending, the world has known the best and the worst. It has benefited from unprecedented breakthroughs in the fields of science, technology and global communications, but it has also endured a heavy toll of lethal wars, totalitarian regimes and major upheavals. Today, with the confluence of ideas emerging throughout the world on the supremacy of law and the democratic ideal, we have the opportunity to spare future generations the scourges of horror and inequality experienced in the last century and thus to put an end to the unbroken chain of misery, ignorance and exclusion. We, the heads of State and Government, have a duty at this historic event to make a solemn commitment as we enter the new millennium to open up a new frontier for humanity, with real justice and compassion in solidarity.

"This new frontier for humanity is based primarily on a concept of global human security, which means that no child anywhere will die of hunger; pandemics will not spread; ethnic tension will not erupt into violence; women will not be victimized by discrimination or violations of their dignity; the right of free expression will not be stifled; immigrants will not suffer exclusion; people will not be deprived of education; water boundaries will not lead to conflict; and sanctions will not unduly and unjustly penalize innocent populations.

"This new frontier is also based on strategic and institutional coherence, because local governance can fully succeed only in the context of true international democracy animated by a successful United Nations system and with human and financial resources that are adequate to the global mandates entrusted to the various agencies. In this respect, it will be necessary in due course to reform the United Nations Charter, updating some of its obsolete provisions while preserving the universal principles that prevailed in the founding of a unique Organization which is called on to play a lead role in the macromanagement of world problems.

"It is also necessary to take advantage of the political impulse of this Summit to promote the restructuring of the Security Council in order to allow that most important organ better to reflect the new world political architecture, taking account of the need for impartiality, effectiveness, representativeness and irrefutable legitimacy. We must recall that, since the most recent reform in 1963, the number of United Nations Member States has grown by two thirds. It is therefore time to expand the representation of the developing world on the Council, attaching priority to the criteria of effective commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security.

"The so-called 'digital divide' can be reduced only through a technological democracy that recognizes the right to universal access to information technology as a global public right.

"Finally, we strongly believe that an international order of justice and equity must redress the distortions in the world economy, reduce the harmful effects of speculative financial flows and act more decisively against the social and regional imbalances throughout the world. In this context, I should like to recall the appeal made on the occasion of the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994 by my father, King Hassan II, in calling for the implementation of multilateral global governance, taking into particular account the enhanced coordination of the activities of the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO.

"The available indicators and statistics and the anachronistic trends that characterize the structure of the world economy prove that it is also imperative to find new sources of financing for sustainable development if we do not wish to condemn broader segments of humanity to misery

without end or to generate global upheavals that could wipe out recent achievements in international law and the relative attenuation of ideological and geopolitical confrontations.

"The special high-level session to be held next year on a world partnership for development will offer an exceptional opportunity to design innovative formulas and to commit additional resources to the developing world, which has been caught in a vise between the constraints of the donors and the indifference of investors. Such an initiative, in addition to being a founding act of multilateral diplomacy for the new generation, would spark active solidarity among men and mark the birth of what I might call 'planetary patriotism'. In that respect, the African continent, which has been marginalized in all sectors of international life, needs a multifaceted strategy involving a substantial reduction of its external debt, the elimination of protectionist barriers that penalize its products, which are already undervalued and poorly remunerated; the establishment of adjustment programmes that are compatible with the abatement of its conflicts and an accelerated development of its human resources; technological transfers adapted to its specific needs; and adequately structured financial assistance.

"In that capacity, the Kingdom of Morocco proposes that the United Nations establish a standing high-level mechanism to implement the decisions of the international community for Africa."

We thank you for your kind attention and express our best wishes for the success of this Millennium Summit, to which our Secretary-General, as well as the international civil servants as a whole, together with the Non-Governmental Organizations Forum, have devoted the best of their talents and energies.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.7

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-fifth session

7th plenary meeting
Friday, 8 September 2000, 9 a.m.
New York

Co-Chairperson: Ms. Tarja Halonen ..... (President of the Republic of Finland)
Co-Chairperson: Mr. Sam Nujoma ..... (President of the Republic of Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.

Addresses on the occasion of the Summit *(continued)*

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will hear an address by His Excellency Retired Colonel Yahya Jammeh, President of the Republic of the Gambia.

President Jammeh: We have gathered here once more to not only take stock of the achievements and shortcomings of the United Nations at this end of an era, but also to chart a new agenda of participation and collective commitment by evolving a better and more responsive role for our Organization in the new millennium. As we speak, despite the 50 years of existence of the United Nations, the international community still remains preoccupied with the same chronic concerns of survival and advancement — objectives that have always been the subjects of recommendations, resolutions and decisions of virtually all international meetings. Time and time again, the adoption of resolutions and the successful attainment of objectives set continue to either elude us or yield only meagre reward for our efforts.

The convening of this Summit challenges us to take far-reaching decisions relating specifically to the right to development, the fair and equitable participation of developing countries in globalization and liberalization, practical commitment to poverty eradication, North-South technical and economic cooperation, and last but not least, the promotion and preservation of international peace and security. All these are desirable and achievable objectives, provided we are prepared to agree unreservedly to commit ourselves, our Governments and the required resources to their attainment.

Our Organization enjoins us world leaders and citizens to combine forces to bring about a brighter future for humankind by ushering in a more balanced and equitable world devoid of social injustice, economic deprivation, hunger and diseases, as well as senseless wars. This dream can only be realized through the establishment of permanent peace and security across the globe. It is a fact that democracy, social development and justice can not take place in the absence of peace.

International peace and security can bring about economic wonders around the world, especially in Africa. But how do we bring about permanent global peace and security? This can be achieved only through tolerance, love and caring for each other. We must ensure an equitable and a just distribution of the world's resources and wealth and inculcate the spirit of caring and sharing to replace the present world economic order. We must replace the rationale of "super profit-making" with the rationale of super welfare or super humanity to bring about the narrowing of the gap between the rich and poor nations of our global village.

The present imbalances and lack of fair adjustments in our participation in the process of

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globalization should also be addressed so as to enable developing countries to take advantage of world economic growth by mobilizing both domestic and external resources for sustained economic growth and development.

The promotion of peace and democratic values and principles is linked to the development of good relations between Governments. It is for these reasons that my Government considers the failure of the United Nations to respect the dignity and rights of 23 million Taiwanese to membership in our esteemed Organization as a serious setback to the professed universality of the United Nations and a gross contradiction to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In like manner, the economic embargo on Cuba has proven to be very counterproductive and it is my Government's hope that the international community's recent change of attitude would usher in renewed cooperation and reconciliation with that great country.

The United Nations has immense potential to serve humanity well, within the framework of multilateralism. Its effectiveness or failure depends entirely on Member States and what we make of it. Indeed, against the backdrop of fundamental changes in the international scene, the reforms of the United Nations system, especially reform of the Security Council, require urgent attention to ensure transparency and fairness, based on proportionate representation and sharing of responsibilities.

The United Nations should be the moral standard bearer of humankind, ensuring justice, equality, peace and stability around the world and among nations, irrespective of size, geographical location or economic status in the twenty-first century and beyond. It should be a source of hope for the desperate and of solace and succour for the afflicted, and inspire confidence among the downtrodden and destitute the world over. In this way the notion of "We the Peoples" will have relevance to our profession of faith in our common humanity. Then, and only then, can we claim the twenty-first century, strengthened in our resolve to make this planet a better and more productive one where humankind can live in dignity and peace.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Miguel Angel Rodriguez Echeverría, President of the Republic of Costa Rica.

President Rodríguez Echeverría (*spoke in Spanish*): We respond to the call of the United Nations to celebrate together the dawn of a new era, an era of progress and hope for humanity.

From the last century, we inherited innumerable achievements, but also grave shortcomings. Mankind's work is unfinished.

We cannot allow ourselves to feel satisfied. Urgent challenges demand response. Costa Rica comes to this Millennium Assembly convinced that we must work together to transform those challenges into the achievements of the new millennium.

We must not forget that 11 million girls and boys under the age of 5 die annually due to preventable causes. Over the last two years, Costa Rica was able to reduce infant mortality by 17 per cent, even though it had a low rate to begin with. However, it is too small a country to save those millions of children who die; 30,500 will die today. These deaths demand our collective action.

We must not forget that 130 million girls and boys do not have access to primary education and that due to gender inequality, millions of women see their right to education hampered. We have an illiteracy rate of only 4.4 per cent in Costa Rica and we are pleased to know that it is even lower among women. But we are a small country and there remains work to do. Creating a society of opportunities on the entire planet requires the effort of all nations.

We must not forget the millions of lives lost in the wars of the twentieth century. My country eliminated the army more than half a century ago to invest in education and health. Today our health system is better even than those of developed countries and we are the healthiest Latin American society, according to the World Health Organization and *The Economist*. However, our country cannot contribute more so that the billions of dollars spent on arms and armies be redirected to human development, as they should be. That requires the commitment of all.

We must not ignore the damage caused to future generations by the levelling of thousands of square kilometres of the planet's forests. Costa Rica is developing a national pay system for environmental services. However, to mitigate the effects of greenhouse gases and to preserve our forests to the benefit of humanity, the effective commitment of all is

required to create an international market for the sale of environmental services.

Knowledge, information and access to the new technologies are key today to generating well-being. The new frontiers today are technological. Thus, as we did at the last session of the General Assembly, we agree with the need to motivate the massive distribution of vaccines and medicine in the most needy sectors of humanity, before Jeffrey Sachs' farsighted warning. This year we are united by the commitment to reduce the digital divide so that injustice and inequality do not increase. That was the warning of the Holy See a few weeks ago. On that same day, Costa Rica initiated the programme called "Communication without Borders", and it became the first country to offer free electronic mail to the entire population.

We must not forget the promotion of democratic values and human rights, deeply rooted in Costa Rican tradition. For that reason, we celebrate democratic consolidation — due to recent elections led by brilliant Government statesmen, after long periods with the same governing party — being enjoyed by Mexico and the Republic of China in Taiwan, which deserves an appropriate place within international organizations. We highlight the Secretary-General's support for the University of Peace to promote those values and we firmly support its efforts for all countries to ratify the human right treaties, because enforcement and respect for these should be limitless. In this new millennium of hope, the multilateral application of international law must ensure, in addition to sovereignty, the enforcement of that law based in the dignity of the human being.

Today the world's poorest societies are experiencing the serious consequences of the artificially driven increase in oil prices. On the average, 77 million barrels of oil are consumed daily. Given that its overpricing is close to $10 per barrel, at the end of one year we would pay more than $280 billion in excess.

With that enormous amount of resources, 1,100 million people could receive adequate health care. Thus, the infant mortality could be reduced and longevity could be increased. With those resources, 28 million housing units could be built, or primary education could be offered to 550 million girls and boys or secondary education could be offered to 430 million youths.

This is the terrible cost in human terms of oil overpricing. This source of the impoverishment of millions of people must be halted. Today, more than ever, we require the commitment of countries and international bodies on this issue that affects the right of all people to human development. For that reason, I appreciate the decision made by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela last night to support the Central American and Caribbean countries, which will be announced today by President Chávez.

The United Nations can and must respond to the challenges of the new millennium with our political and material support. To eliminate war, we must restructure the Security Council; to promote peace in terms of social justice, democracy and human development, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Development Programme must be on an equal footing with the Security Council.

Today I ask the nations of the world to join efforts so that international solidarity will be the mark of our times; let every woman and man will feel like a member of one race: the human race; and let there be only one destiny: human development. Only in this manner will this new era be an era of progress and hope for humanity.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hugo Banzer Suarez, President of the Republic of Bolivia.

President Banzer Suárez (*spoke in Spanish*): More than half a century ago, when the San Francisco Charter was signed, different times and other circumstances reigned. A war that had shaken humanity had ended. The maintenance of peace and international security constituted the essential objective of the United Nations. The political independence of new States and the promotion of democratic values, respect for humans rights and cooperation among the peoples were among its others goals. Disputes would henceforth be resolved by peaceful means.

Thus an era of hope was ushered in. These objectives and principles are still valid. However, the end of the confrontation between East and West did not bring substantial benefits in the economic field for the less developed countries. That conflict has been

replaced by a sort of antagonism between North and South — in other words, between the economic Powers and the nations that are struggling to improve their levels of growth.

It is certain that, in the period that began in 1945, the much-feared nuclear war did not take place, and it is also certain that important opportunities for cooperation opened up. In this sphere, the United Nations played an important role. Clearly, however, tensions persist with other characteristics, generated in essence by backwardness, poverty and inequalities, which have increased to a dangerous extent. Those factors have determined new divisions affecting contemporary society, which need urgent correction.

That is why we are gathered here today — to consider a new agenda incorporating the current challenges and preparing us adequately to meet effectively the challenges of the future. However, this Millennium Summit has to mean much more than that.

In my opinion, it is urgent that we reach agreements and assume commitments on a group of essential topics, because the millennium agenda cannot be reduced to a mere wishlist of good proposals. It should mean a major commitment of historical significance to leading our countries forward towards the common destiny we all seek — a future built upon the solid foundations of equity and justice, tolerance and dialogue, and respect for man, nature and the values of representative and participatory democracy; a future that would lead us to establish conditions that mitigate the inequalities, the origin of the conflicts of our times. For obvious reasons, I will touch on only some aspects of the reflection that the Secretary-General has requested of us.

There is ultimately a close relationship between freedom and poverty and between poverty and violence. Nobody can call free human beings who live chained to the limitations that destitution imposes upon millions of people. There can be neither economic nor political stability if we do not address social imbalances. Freedom is always threatened when poverty is present. We must balance the variety of interests, within a framework of inclusive prosperity, between those who have more and those who can only offer their labour. These are the roots of current and futures dangers.

Social demands are unquestionably legitimate. The commitment to fighting against poverty must be made under the principle of shared responsibility, as it is with the fight against the drug traffic, a field in which Bolivians have achieved spectacular results that are internationally recognized. According to the Secretary-General's report, more than 1 billion people subsist on less than $1 a day. In this era of knowledge, globalization must become an instrument to fight that painful reality and not to exacerbate the crises, as has recently happened.

We have a diagnosis of the problem that cannot be contested on technical grounds. I would stress that what is lacking are agreements that allow the promotion of economic development based on an ethic of solidarity more universal, more equitable and less concentrated and that distributes revenues in a better way. The shared responsibility that we propose has to be expressed in a truly democratic form in the terms of trade, where the economically large countries can clearly contribute in greater measure.

It is fundamental that, in a so-called open economy, markets not be closed with discriminatory measures and protectionist criteria. It is essential that differentiated preferential treatment be applied and that special support be given so that countries with weak institutional structures can move ahead, as Bolivia has done. Reforms are needed that will allow them to attract larger flows of capital. It is vital that debt-relief programmes be enacted to liberate many countries from the stranglehold of debt. Science and technology cannot become commodities for exclusion. They should be the shared wealth of human development in all corners of the Earth.

Only thus we will better distribute economic and political power throughout the world, ensuring that big and small States alike are guided by the same agenda on fundamental issues by means of a true democratic process in which the few may not dictate norms that the rest have to accept. Only with this vision will we carry through on the commitment that we have all undertaken at this Millennium Summit to respond to the same ethical values in the certainty that there can be no stable peace nor security in a world that is built on the foundations of vast disparities.

Now, the execution of such a great mandate requires a strengthened institution. The role of United Nations must therefore be given new impetus in the financing of development in order to balance its

responsibilities with the objectives of peace and security.

I hope that those who, 50 years from now, are to evaluate what we are doing today will confirm that we had the capacity to adopt the correct decisions and the will to apply them to the benefit of humanity.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania.

President Constantinescu (*spoke in French*): Our conference is called the Millennium Summit. We may consider whether we ought, first, to attempt to summarize the experience that mankind has accumulated over the course of the closing millennium or whether we ought to turn already to the new millennium about to start. The historic period that is coming to an end requires us to understand that the hope for an entirely innocent beginning at the threshold of the new millennium is as unfounded as the millennial terror of total catastrophe. We should embrace in equal measure the certainties of continuity and aspiration to progress that the experience of a millennium inspires.

Mankind has just reached a point in its history that is not only critical, but full of hope. After the tragic experiences humanity underwent on a global scale during this past century, we are seeing the birth, for the first time in history, of a universal culture of peace.

As a foundation of the culture of peace and guardian of equity, the United Nations has never ceased to play an essential role by putting its experience to good use. That role makes the United Nations a key actor in building the future. The calling of the United Nations is not just to be a body that manages spheres of influence. It was also conceived as a pragmatic institution and as an expression of a global vision. This philosophy, formulated at the inception of both the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is the basis of the Organization's future projects.

The United Nations is an extremely important actor in managing globalization to make it a process that provides maximum advantages, with as few negative effects as possible, for the development of all the world's societies and cultures. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should give priority attention to the effects of globalization, for public opinion could gradually become more hostile to it, and should develop fair common principles and practices to give globalization a framework for it to bring about the progress of all mankind.

As the current Chair of the Conference of New and Restored Democracies, Romania is directly interested in developing efforts aimed at consolidating democracies. This year we initiated and supported at the Commission on Human Rights a resolution entitled "Promotion and consolidation of democracy". We welcome the initiative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Mary Robinson, in proposing a joint declaration opposing discrimination, racism and all forms of xenophobia. The laws that govern our States are based on the presumption of innocence. Along the same lines, we need to adopt a common code of conduct for cultures and peoples based on a presumption of goodwill. Romania also has profound respect for United Nations action aimed at avoiding, or at least restricting, armed conflict and at guaranteeing dignity and fundamental rights for every human being.

Romania has unhesitatingly contributed to peacekeeping operations. Recently over 7,000 officers and policemen have been participating in United Nations operations in Somalia, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. In the same spirit, we have decided to provide additional concrete proof of our desire to participate. I therefore announce, on behalf of the Romanian Government, that we are ready to reconsider Romania's status with regard to the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations and voluntarily give up the reduction we have enjoyed as a member of group "C".

We believe that this new stage in international affairs requires a new consensus, to make the Security Council more energetic and avoid stagnation. One matter on which it seems to me agreement is already possible is the need to emphasize a preventive, not reactive, culture in the work of the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council. As the future President-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Romania will endeavour to promote the principles of such a culture of prevention, and will give continuous attention to harmonious and effective cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations.

We are firmly convinced that, united, the nations of the world can confidently look to a common future of peace and mutual respect, and that the United Nations has both the calling and the capacity to give institutional form to this common hope for progress and human dignity that inspires us all.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

President Batlle Ibáñez (*spoke in Spanish*): We are here today to represent our peoples, 6 billion human beings. Without a doubt, we are all equal, but it is also true that we are all different. What unites us is what we all share, our natural rights, which can be summed up by a simple rule that we often forget: do as you would be done by.

In order to put that rule into practice, our country — Uruguay — has taken part in every initiative throughout the twentieth century to organize people's lives along the lines of peace and freedom. At The Hague Peace Conference in 1906 we proposed mandatory arbitration as a means of settling disputes between nations. Later we became Members of the League of Nations. We were founding members of the United Nations, and took part in drafting the Charter as part of the core group of drafters. We were the first to adopt the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. Since 1952 we have continuously taken part in United Nations peacekeeping missions and operations.

The United Nations Charter contains irrefutable political wisdom. Our greatest challenge is to uphold the Charter in good faith and without duplicity. If we did so many of our problems would be diminished or would perhaps even disappear altogether.

Maintaining peace and reducing poverty are fundamental goals of the international community. But war, violence and poverty are the effects of much more deep-rooted causes. It is not just by addressing the effects that we will honour our commitments. It is essential to address their causes.

Freedom is indivisible. There can be no political freedom without all the other freedoms. Throughout their lives, human beings organize themselves into societies — forming families, ensuring the continuation of the species, giving their children shared moral values, and applying their energies and talents to many types of work. When this vital activity of the human family is thwarted because their fruits are not allowed to reach world markets, nations are weakened and impoverished and become easy prey to demagogy, lies, injustice and backwardness, and sink into violence, as we saw in the course of the last century. That is why one of the most important tasks of the United Nations in this millennium must be to guarantee our right to create and produce, as well as our right to offer and to sell our products. Free trade, about which so much has been said and so little done, is more necessary than ever for a planet made smaller and much more interdependent by globalization.

Our region, America, including Uruguay, has already undergone a period of globalization during the so-called Atlantic civilization, in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. It served everyone well. We grew and, as a result, were able to consolidate a nation in which equality, justice and freedom prevailed.

That globalization had one great advantage: markets were open to the fruits of our labour and to the products of our land. Today circumstances are quite different, which is having adverse effects on the lives of our people. This political Assembly is a great Assembly of peoples, whom we, as heads of State and Government, represent. It is in this forum, at the highest and most representative level, that we must take the decisions and undertake the commitments that will determine our future and that of succeeding generations.

Uruguay believes that the struggle for that freedom is one of the fundamental tasks facing the United Nations in the next millennium.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alberto Fujimori Fujimori, Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru.

President Fujimori (*spoke in Spanish*): At this Millennium Summit, at which we are collectively examining the role that the United Nations is to play in the twenty-first century, the Peruvian Government deems it necessary to look beyond key general aspects, which can be considered and discussed at a later date, to the question of securing economic resources, which can help to reduce extreme poverty. That is possibly the most important goal to emerge from this Summit.

To this end, we have to recognize the enormous proportions being assumed today by international drug trafficking — another issue we have decided to tackle. We believe that, without giving short shrift to direct efforts to eradicate this phenomenon, assets seized from drug traffickers should be used to achieve the aforementioned goal.

To date little is known of the fate of the thousands of millions of dollars that are being kept in secret accounts. We need mechanisms which, without violating the right to privacy of legal bank accounts, will nonetheless allow these ill-gotten gains to be confiscated for the benefit of poor countries. This would represent a major step forward in combating drug trafficking as well as a tremendous contribution to achieving this common goal and alleviating the difficulties of poor countries, which suffer the greatest harm as a result of the actions of criminal organizations.

In this way the endlessly postponed crop-substitution strategy could be funded. Crops such as coca leaves, opium poppies or marijuana could be replaced with alternatives, thus helping the farmers who are growing them out of necessity.

I put forward this proposal, which Peru regards as a tremendous and historic challenge for the United Nations in the twenty-first century — a century that must be a time for action and concrete achievements aimed at ensuring the welfare of peoples and safeguarding world peace and security.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ernesto Zedillo, President of the United Mexican States.

President Zedillo *(spoke in Spanish)*: Mexico is attending this Summit confident that here, our United Nations will undertake serious commitments to confront the challenges ushered in by the new millennium.

The greatest challenge facing us is to ensure that every woman and every man can fully enjoy the fundamental freedoms of the human being — freedom to be educated, freedom to obtain food, freedom to safeguard health, freedom to work, freedom to participate in economic trade, freedom to hold beliefs and to express their opinions, and freedom to participate in public affairs and in decision-making. To ensure that these freedoms are be exercised not only by the most privileged among us but by every single person in every part of the world, we have at our disposal the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General and in the draft Millennium Declaration, which the Government of Mexico enthusiastically endorses.

Mexico welcomes the fact that the Millennium Declaration reaffirms basic principles such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the sovereign equality of all States and non-interference in domestic affairs.

It is Mexico's conviction that the political independence of nations and the self-determination of peoples must be fully respected, even in this new era of economic, financial and information globalization.

Mexico agrees with the Secretary-General that globalization offers great opportunities but that, for the time being, its benefits are being unevenly distributed.

From firsthand experience, we Mexicans know that globalization is not the problem. Rather, it is the reverse: globalization can be part of the solution, or, as the Secretary-General has said, it must become a positive force for the entire world population to resolve the real problems: poverty, marginalization and inequality.

This inequality, both among and within nations, has deepened, for while some are participating in globalization others are not, or cannot. In some cases, they do not participate because of a lack of political or economic freedom — because of a lack of democracy. Others, even given the presence of democracy, cannot participate because a lack of education, health and adequate nutrition prevents them from exercising their freedoms and from taking advantage of the potential of globalization.

Hence the great importance of firmly committing ourselves to working hard to achieve the draft Declaration's targets on education, health, employment and equality. Mexico supports those targets and subscribes to the idea of formulating national and collective plans of action to attain them. We support the targets because we are confident that we Mexicans have the grounding to do our share to attain them. We support them out of a conviction that if we sow freedom, we will reap peace and justice, well-being and harmony.

Every country has an unavoidable task of its own, a task it must carry out through its own efforts, but we all need the encouragement and the cooperation of the United Nations. We cannot make progress towards our goals without urgent reform of the United Nations to make it more democratic and representative, more efficient and useful for all, which will give it greater legitimacy and authority in the eyes of the peoples of the world. Only an Organization that has reformed to become democratic, and has thus been strengthened, can contribute to other crucial endeavours, such as the creation of a world free of drugs, small arms and terrorism, a world capable of preventing and confronting natural disasters, a world in which our children will have the freedom to forge just and sustainable development.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, President of the Republic of Indonesia.

President Wahid: We are gathered in this forum to celebrate the existence of the United Nations. The United Nations has enabled us to tackle our problems. Even though not all problems can be solved, the United Nations itself has developed into an institution that is powerful enough to address the world's problems. Of course, some people say that the United Nations is obsolete. I believe that improvements will come in due time, and that they will come again and again. The world demands that we should work together and coordinate our efforts for the benefit of mankind as a whole. In that respect, I would like to welcome the new millennium as a time when the United Nations can develop into a more powerful body that will represent all of us in many areas.

This morning I had breakfast with the Secretary-General and with other heads of State to talk about information technology, and about how the Economic and Social Council can support the development of information technology for all countries Members of the United Nations. That is just one example of the things that can be done with United Nations coordination.

The third millennium is important because in this millennium we will be able to coordinate and to work together for the benefit of mankind as a whole. Of course, this means that we will have to look at the overlapping picture and devise a very effective way of tackling our problems. As members know, regional associations, such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for example, must be considered along with entire continents, such as Asia — I often talk about the identity of Asia — and with international forums such as the United Nations. The sometimes overlapping workings of all three can aid and support each country's individual efforts to attain sustainable development. That is important because, without the existence of the United Nations, continent-wide groupings and regional associations, we will never be able to achieve the solidarity needed for such development.

Of course, we have different interpretations of what is taking place, for example the problem between us and East Timor and developments within the Indonesian side of Timor. Earlier, the Secretary-General called for the observance of a minute of silence for the death of United Nations personnel in Atambua; that is an example of the many incidents we must address and the many occurrences we must consider as an international body.

Being an optimist, I therefore look forward to the rest of the new millennium as a time when we will be able to strive together and to coordinate our efforts to develop together and attain results that will mean an improved lot for mankind.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo.

President Nguesso (*spoke in French*): We congratulate the Secretary-General on his relevant report (A/54/2000), in which he reflects upon the problems and the challenges that the world is facing. We are most grateful for that analysis, as well as for the outcome of the South Summit of the Group of 77, which took place last April at Havana. The issues addressed there included good governance, peace and security, globalization, indebtedness and the fight against poverty; these are matters to which the people of the Congo attach the greatest importance as we emerge from the catastrophe caused by the repeated civil wars we have experienced of late. The Congo has emerged from these terrible challenges, wounded and torn apart.

In addition, we have made peace our sole priority. Peace is the priority because we must rebuild a shattered country.

In this regard, my Government has adopted an interim three-year post-conflict programme. For it to be implemented, international community support is necessary. Peace is a priority so as to bring about the conditions necessary to give new impetus to the democratic process. A major national debate on a draft constitution will soon take place as a preliminary to general elections.

Peace in the Congo will always be fragile unless Central Africa quickly regains its footing and stability. For this to happen, the conflicts that are still dividing the region — and particularly the most worrisome conflict, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — must be properly settled. In this regard, the international community has the major responsibility. It is time to escape the shackles of procrastination and prevarication and to act in accord with the demands of history so as to save the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the entire region of Central Africa and the Great Lakes. It is time to create, without further delay, all the conditions necessary and seize every proper opportunity to come up with a comprehensive peace and stability settlement that will benefit all the countries in the region. It is time and urgent that the States in this enormous area come together and combine their will and energy to vigorously undertake the regional integration process.

Achieving definitive peace will require taking up this noble mission. This is why I suggest that we very quickly consider holding an international conference that brings together all the countries in the region of Central Africa and the Great Lakes, along with the international community, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

In speaking about the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would like to call attention to the fact that a humanitarian catastrophe is occurring in the north of my country, in the Likouala region. Between 70,000 and 100,000 refugees, fleeing the conflict in the north of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have settled — without any sort of assistance and amid the general indifference of the international community.

The Headquarters of the United Nations is the best possible place to speak about human rights. May I be allowed here, from this rostrum of the nations, to appeal to the international community to take a look at its past — our common past — to recall what has been done on this earth. I am referring to the most enormous attack on human dignity — the black slave trade and slavery. Denying men and women their humanity, these practices were the greatest violation of human rights.

At this moment when we have just seen the end of the second millennium during which these tragedies of universal history were enacted, we appeal to humanity, to the international community here represented, to see that the black slave trade and slavery be acknowledged as crimes against humanity.

We are not seeking any reparations. Above all, it is a matter of history, there is an obligation to remember. It is a matter of the truth and of dignity for humanity. Thus the dark page of the millennium that has ended can be turned once and for all.

When one is at a crossroads, there are signposts that one must know how to read, there are symbols that one must know how to interpret, if one is not to be misled and make incorrect choices.

The United Nations is at a crossroads, together we must make sure that it is put on the right road to save the world from collective regression. This right road is that of the reform that has been suggested by, aspired to and demanded by the majority of our nations. But, unfortunately, this reform continues to be postponed. The time has come to implement this reform.

This reform means arriving at an equitable representation of all the nations by strengthening the powers of the General Assembly and increasing membership in the Security Council. This reform also means making the Organization more human, to make man once again the centre of the Organization's concerns and interests, so that the United Nations can take once more its place at the heart of international relations and at the heart of universal issues and universality — for which the United Nations provides, at the same time, the foundation. This reform also means promoting the Organization's multilateral character and, above all, acting so that the United Nations can again play its proper role and take up its proper responsibility in peacekeeping. This reform means finally truly democratizing the United Nations so that it can be the forum for facilitating the true realization of the aspirations of all humanity and so

that it can allow the entire community of nations to participate in the real exercise of power within our Organization.

Africa is expecting that, as a result of such inspired reform, it will take its proper and rightful place.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

President Mugabe: We are gathered here to observe the new millennium, whose arrival we have been privileged to witness. I want to begin by asking whether this passage of time is a marker of qualitative change in the human condition and in human relations, is it human change in qualitative terms? Has the passage transported us all into a new commonwealth of diverse yet truly united peoples of the world living in one village? Are all the peoples of the world truly in the twenty-first century by the way they live?

Sadly, most of us in Africa and the developing world are still stuck in problems dating back to the days of slavery and colonialism. We remain burdened with the unfinished business of the twentieth century, including even the problem of the "colour line".

In Zimbabwe, and only because of the colour line arising from British colonialism, 70 per cent of the best arable land is owned by less than 1 per cent of the population, which happens to be white, while the black majority is congested on barren land. We have sought to redress this inequity through a land reform and resettlement programme that will effect economic and social justice, and this in terms of our constitution and laws. But what has been the response of former imperialist quarters?

Their response has been staggering beyond description. My country, my Government, my party and my own person have been labelled "land grabbers", demonized, reviled and threatened with sanctions in the face of accusations of reverse racism. W. E. B. Du Bois must be turning in his grave for having thought the problem of the colour line would disappear with the twentieth century. But our conscience, of course, remains clear. We will not go back. We shall continue to effect economic and social justice for all our people without fear or favour.

Our world has shrunk into a global village, and time, place and distance continue to shrink inexorably by the day. The biggest challenge for us still remains not only cyberspace, nor the great superhighway responsible for shrinking our world, but demands of us an answer to the age-old question, "who is my neighbour?" Whichever part of the globe we find ourselves in, the questions that should be asked are whether the man, the woman, the country, the region and the continent on my doorstep are neighbourly and whether the culture or civilization of my neighbour truly coincides and blends with mine to enable us have peaceful and friendly coexistence.

The question my compatriots and I face in Zimbabwe, as put to us by our peasants, is whether a globalized environment will enable them to have a patch of land to till and whether the ugly anomaly which history gave them in respect of land ownership shall be resolved in order to enlarge their own freedom so they can begin to be like the rest of mankind. They ask why a predatory political economy that the United Nations rejected and helped fight in the 1960s, throughout the 1970s and in the 1980s now has once again found so many globalized protectors? They want to understand why a system which is at the centre of poverty, at the centre of race relations, at the centre of denying developing countries their sense of sovereignty and democracy is made to appear so right, just and fair.

We are either makers of a new world based on new democratic principles of economic and social justice or we remain in the old world with some conquering nations still set on old agendas of shrinking the rights of smaller nations as they enlarge their own conquests, sanctifying this under the cover of good governance, transparency, anti-corruption, democracy, human rights and digital technology.

We anticipate the risk of importing the spirit and the contradictions of the Victorian era of slavery and colonialism into the new millennium and the new world order. We also risk accepting the hypocrisy hidden in the demand for the democratic reform of national Governments and institutions in developing countries while doing nothing to reform the undemocratic structures and practices of international bodies such as the Bretton Woods institutions and indeed our very United Nations itself.

If the new millennium, like the last, remains an age of hegemonic empires and conquerors doing the same old things in new technological ways, remains the

age of the master race, of the master economy and master State, then I am afraid we in developing countries will have to stand up as a matter of principle and say no, not again.

The time has come for the practice of political and economic dominance of poor nations by the rich to give way to the birth of a new interdependent world that recognizes and respects the diversity and the dignity of all cultures and civilizations. In this connection, I am pleased that the United Nations has declared 2001 the "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations".

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Mr. Rabbani (*spoke in Persian, English text furnished by the delegation*): Allow me at the outset to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive, analytical, forward-looking, visionary and challenging report entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century".

The numerous specific goals and programmes outlined in this report could well be considered the United Nations plan of action for the twenty-first century. It is the only multilateral body with universal membership and a mandate, derived from its Charter, encompassing security, development, human rights and environmental protection.

The founding of the United Nations 55 years ago marked the victory of moral principles and the triumph of democratic values, and Afghanistan joined the United Nations the following year. While the Islamic State of Afghanistan remains strongly committed to the provisions, purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, this Summit presents a timely opportunity at the threshold of the new millennium, to rethink and reassess the United Nations goals, functions, successes and failures around the globe since its inception.

The Secretary-General's report sets out a practical vision for the Organization in a globalized world, one that has changed dramatically over the past 55 years. Among the key messages in this report is the need to make globalization more inclusive, thus creating more opportunities for all, and not to leave billions of people in a state of poverty and exclusion.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan fully agrees with the report of the Secretary-General that the twentieth century enjoyed unprecedented economic gains. However, 1.2 billion people still live on less than $1 a day. The combination of extreme poverty with extreme inequality within and between countries is an affront to our common humanity, a tragic situation requiring urgent global solidarity. In the past decade, more efforts were made for the expansion of global markets than for poverty reduction, human rights and environmental protection. Global solidarity necessitates that rich countries further open their markets to poor countries' products, as well as provide deeper and faster debt relief and better development assistance.

In order to cope effectively with these economic and social challenges, the Economic and Social Council should be further strengthened, thus enabling it to fulfil the duties attributed to it in the United Nations Charter.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan fully endorses the values and goals presented by the Secretary-General for this Summit's consideration.

Having endured two decades of ceaseless suffering, we earnestly wish that the Afghan nation will enjoy peace and security at the beginning of the twenty-first century. We desire the creation of a broad-based government in Afghanistan, under the auspices of the United Nations, so that our nation can start the task of reconstruction and development in an environment free from conspiracy and foreign interference, which have turned our land into a terrorist training camp, a centre for drug smugglers and a base for spreading instability.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Omer Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan.

President Al-Bashir (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express my appreciation for the efforts and endeavours of the Co-Chairpersons in preparation for this historic event. On behalf of the Government and the people of the Sudan, and on my own behalf, allow me also to express our appreciation to Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, who took

the initiative two years ago of convening this Millennium Summit to explore a new role for the United Nations in the twenty-first century. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report in which he outlined this role.

It is the Sudan's strong belief that the United Nations continues to represent the ideal mechanism for the enhancement of international cooperation and global partnership. The United Nations remains indispensable and irreplaceable. To achieve its goals, we should reaffirm the principles that constitute the foundation of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Charter, foremost among which is respect for sovereignty of States, non-interference in their internal affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We view with satisfaction the Assembly's final document, which includes important elements such as solidarity, tolerance, freedom and pluralism. We should all endeavour to make this Organization more democratic and representative by reviving the central role of the General Assembly and enhancing its efficiency so that the United Nations can carry out its tasks.

There is also a great need to reform the Security Council, to make it more democratic and representative, and to improve its methods of work, including the issues of decision-making and the right to veto.

We appreciate the agreement among all Member States to give special attention to Africa, as set forth in the Declaration, which calls for effective measures to enable the African countries to overcome their economic difficulties, to achieve stability, to move towards development and to meet the challenges of globalization.

The four decades devoted to development have elapsed without having attained the desired goals for the developing countries, and for Africa in particular. This failure has been particularly reflected in the widening development gap between developed and developing countries, the increased levels of poverty in sub-Saharan African countries, the decline of official development assistance, the deterioration of terms of trade and the increase in the levels of external debt.

The convening of the Millennium Summit revives our hopes of overcoming the challenges facing international cooperation and development. In order to realize this, we call upon the international community, first, to cancel the external debts of the highly indebted poor countries, as proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 181 of his report (A/54/2000); secondly, to facilitate market access of developing countries' exports to industrialized countries; and, thirdly, to implement the commitment of 0.7 per cent of official development assistance by industrialized countries for development of the developing countries.

The Sudan understands the concerns of the international community regarding the armed conflict in southern Sudan. Here we reiterate the commitment of the Government of the Sudan to work for a political resolution of this conflict on the following basis: first, an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire in order to facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance to the needy and as a necessary prerequisite for confidence-building and for the success of peace efforts; secondly, an immediate start to negotiations based on current peace initiatives; and thirdly, a just settlement that paves the way for a fair distribution of power and wealth, establishes rights and duties based on citizenship and guarantees total adherence to international human rights standards.

We take this opportunity to appeal to the international community to support our efforts to resolve this conflict and achieve peace, stability and development. We urge this gathering to use the Millennium Summit as an opportunity to reinforce the values of peaceful coexistence and to respect cultural, ethical and religious pluralism.

We assure the Assembly that we in Sudan will spare no effort to achieve these noble goals and to cooperate with all Member States on the basis of the principles of respect for the choices of others and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. In fact, that is what our tolerant faith and traditions dictate. In the Koran Allah states:

> "O mankind! We created
> you from a single (pair)
> of a male and a female,
> and made you into
> nations and tribes, that
> ye may know each other.
> Verily the most honoured of you
> in the sight of Allah
> is (he who is) the most
> righteous of you."

(*The Holy Koran, 49:13*).

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

President Obasanjo: Humanity has come a long way out of the ruins of the Second World War thanks to this Organization, the United Nations. We have emerged from the era of cold war and incessant fears of global conflagrations. A new horizon is now in front of us, predicated on ever-widening possibilities for development in all spheres of human endeavours, resulting from unparalleled advances in science and technology.

But new challenges have also emerged: challenges of poverty and new diseases that have so far defied scientific knowledge and cure. The world is also faced with the scourge of internal conflicts which threaten regional peace and impede social and economic development.

Although the world has generally become a safer place to live in, thanks to the contributions of the United Nations, we must all feel deeply worried that the message of hope which the Organization has been spreading is yet to reach the millions of humankind for whom it is intended. For the vast majority of our peoples, grinding poverty has remained a fact of their everyday existence.

The national Governments to whom these millions look for succour find themselves in the unenviable predicament of helplessness, incapable of bringing meaningful changes in their people's well-being, due to the heavy burden of external debts which have crippled their capacities for national initiatives.

Old diseases, such as tuberculosis, which we all thought had been eradicated, have reappeared, with devastating consequences, especially in developing countries. In addition, we now have HIV/AIDS, which continues to defy cure, and has now combined with malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases to form a lethal nexus with as much potential for devastation as war itself, and is thus a modern-day threat to world peace and security.

The new millennium is being shaped by forces of globalization that are turning our world into a village. Thus the new millennium will demand of us, more than ever before, to live and work together as members of one human family. But up to now globalization has meant prosperity only for the chosen few of the industrialized countries. For most of us in the developing world, globalization will continue to ring hollow and be of dubious value, until we see its positive effects on our fortunes. In short, globalization has to be seen to mean the eradication of poverty. Then, and only then, will the true spirit of good-neighbourliness reign in the new global village.

The world community is challenged to evolve a new system of international cooperation that will help to eliminate abject poverty throughout the world and integrate the developing countries into the globalized world economy. At the first South Summit of the G-77, held in Havana, Cuba, last April, it was resolved that a new and meaningful partnership with the industrialized nations needed to be forged in order to make this earth a better place for all of us.

We must all be concerned about the persistence of internal conflicts, more especially in our region of Africa. These conflicts have proved to be very brutal, savage and devastating. The unfortunate destruction of lives and properties and its effects on the weaker members of society, namely, children and women, remind us, as Members of the United Nations, that our objective of world peace is still beyond the reach of many communities. Our aim in the new millennium, therefore, must include a renewed determination to resolve these conflicts and prevent new ones so that together all humanity will reap the benefit of peace and march forward in harmony and prosperity.

External debt has emerged as the greatest obstacle to progress in developing countries. Indeed, we note with appreciation that a number of initiatives have been put in place. The reality, however, is that these measures are inadequate. The G-77 strongly urges creditor nations to seize this historic moment to unshackle the economies of developing countries by cancelling all their external debts. This is the only way in which these countries can be given the chance to effectively plan for the improvement of living standards for their peoples.

We are at a new dawn; what it portends we cannot say. But this much we owe to ourselves and to succeeding generations: a world where all nations, all races and all peoples can live in dignity and in peace with one another. We must all resolve to strengthen and

reinvigorate the United Nations for the work and the world ahead.

The reform of the United Nations, in particular the expansion and democratization of the Security Council, is therefore a task which can no longer be postponed if our Organization is to face up to the challenges of the new millennium. In this respect, the Group of 77 pledges its willingness to enter into meaningful dialogue with all our partners so as to re-energize the United Nations — indeed, a body for which there is no substitute — to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and the third millennium.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah: Sixteen years ago, I had the honour of addressing this Assembly for the first time when my country was admitted to the United Nations. It was a different period of world history. The cold war then divided the world along ideological lines, and the threat of a nuclear holocaust was real. The smaller developing countries were particularly vulnerable. They were used as pawns in the global chess game. Brunei Darussalam was one such country. We were determined not to be drawn in.

In the United Nations we found shelter and assurance. It provided a forum where all Member States' sovereignty would be respected, and where all nations, large and small, would have an equal voice and one vote. The United Nations Charter gave small nations like my own a sense of hope and security. For the last 16 years, Brunei Darussalam has participated in the United Nations as a full member of the international community of nations. We have strongly supported the United Nations role in international affairs. We have done what we could to promote the principles and processes of the United Nations Charter. We are committed to continuing this within the limits of our resources.

The post-cold-war era has brought new challenges. Globalization, the result of the revolution in information technology, will break down traditional barriers and borders. Dynamic and powerful forces are at work and will increase economic cooperation and accelerate growth and development. This can lead to improving quality of life, higher standards of living and greater opportunities for all. The benefits are great.

But there are downsides to globalization. With increased movement across borders, transnational crime and terrorism have become serious problems. The disparity between North and South continues to grow as the poorer nations struggle to keep pace with the first world. Globalization could lead to the marginalization of the developing and less developed countries if they do not adapt themselves in order to maximize its benefits. There can be no going back to the past. As we begin the twenty-first century, we should examine and address the negative effects of globalization. These are challenges that go beyond the ability of individual Governments to tackle.

In the twenty-first century, the United Nations role as the conscience of the world is crucial to balance the interests of the successful and the less successful nations in the new economies of globalization. It is a conscience that needs to moderate the results of the winner-take-all paradigm of free-market competition.

Brunei Darussalam faces many of the same challenges as the developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. To meet them, a country needs to adapt and respond quickly to an uncertain and constantly changing external environment. To do this, its most important resource — its people — needs to be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to give it a fighting chance.

I would therefore like to stress the critical importance of programmes, in particular those that focus on health and education. They play a crucial role in helping the development of many of the poorer and less developed countries. By investing in the future of the people of these countries, we will lay the solid foundation upon which these countries' futures can be constructed.

We should do so not merely out of a sense of moral obligation. The survival and progress of the less developed members of the international community is in our best interest. As globalization makes our world ever more interdependent, it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate ourselves from events that occur beyond our immediate regions. There are few matters that are local problems any more. This point was brought home in 1997 by the far-reaching effects of the financial crisis that swept through South-East Asia.

We cannot have a world in which the knowledge-based economies are racing along the information highway while the less developed countries are lagging

behind and struggling with disease, famine and poverty. The best way to ensure a stable international order is to provide developing and less developed countries with knowledge and opportunities for economic, social and technological advancement. This will require renewed commitment from all Members of the United Nations. It would entail a far greater responsibility than we have taken on thus far. This can be achieved if we all come together in a concerted effort. I therefore appeal to all members of the international community to accept this responsibility.

As we begin a new century and a new millennium, let us make every effort to achieve global peace, freedom, tolerance and prosperity in our time. We must allow the United Nations to concentrate its energies on making the world as we would all like to see it. This, I believe, would be the greatest tribute we could offer the Secretary-General and all those who have served the United Nations in the last half century.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to address the Assembly and to share some of my thoughts on the direction and future of our Organization.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

President Karimov (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me to express my appreciation for the opportunity to speak at the Millennium Summit. On the threshold of a new century, international security and stability are still among the fundamental problems facing the contemporary world. The only difference is that instead of remnants of the cold war and the associated obstacles, international terrorism, extremism, aggressive nationalism and separatism are the dangerous detonators that can undermine peace and stability. Uzbekistan fully supports the basic United Nations principle of the indivisibility of security.

Today it is obvious that there can be no comprehensive international security without regional security and the national security of individual States. Those — whether in Europe, the Americas or any other region — that are trying to create an exclusive security cordon to isolate themselves from ostensibly alien problems are blind to reality: today's world is tightly interrelated and indivisible. Experience has shown that ongoing wars, conflicts and confrontations in some regions or States inevitably extend beyond those bounds and take on a cross-border, transnational character, dragging additional territories and Powers into the heat of the conflict.

This may be seen in the Central Asian region, which is at present becoming a target for the expansionism and aggression of the forces of international terrorism and extremism, which harbour the ambitious goal of diverting the States of the region from their chosen road of democratic, secular development, and of setting up despotic clerical regimes in their place.

It is self-evident that the war in Afghanistan, which has continued for more than 20 years, is a principal source of that threat. Afghanistan has become a training ground and hotbed of international terrorism and extremism, and the main source and the warehouse of world drug production, which earns billions of dollars and fuels international terrorism. Areas bordering Afghanistan, first and foremost the States of Central Asia, are being turned into one of the easiest and shortest conduits for transporting hundreds of tons of heroin, mainly to the countries of Europe and North America. That example clearly shows the way in which two monstrous phenomena of our time — international terrorism and drug trafficking — are coalescing.

I wish to take this opportunity to say to the United Nations, the Security Council and the international community that the continuing war in Afghanistan poses as a threat to the security not only of the States of Central Asia, but of the whole world. We must do our utmost speedily to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Afghan problem and to help the long-suffering Afghan people to gain the peace for which they have waited so long. We support all initiatives to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. I stress that the Tashkent Declaration on Fundamental Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict in Afghanistan, adopted in July 1999 by the members of the Six plus Two group set up under United Nations auspices, remains timely and able to serve as the basis for negotiations among the main rival parties.

Along with the political measures taken in the framework of the United Nations, it is high time to draft an extensive programme for the peaceful post-conflict rehabilitation of Afghanistan, and for its economic and humanitarian renewal.

I turn now to the urgent and central need to strengthen the international community's fight against

the growing threat of international terrorism. Uzbekistan welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for an international conference on counter-terrorism to be convened under United Nations auspices. I am confident that through joint efforts we will be able to combat terrorism and extremism, but only if we fight not only against its manifestations but also, and primarily, against international centres with sizeable financial and other capacities, which mobilize and direct terrorists, and provide them with the most up-to-date weapons and equipment. It is hard to imagine what the world situation would be were those forces to obtain access to deadly chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction. In that respect it is now important to secure, not in words but in practice, the agreement of the Group of Eight to eliminate the financial sources of terrorist activity.

From this rostrum, I call on members to support Uzbekistan's initiative, put forward at the Istanbul summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, on the establishment of an international counter-terrorism centre within the United Nations system.

Uzbekistan advocates strict and unconditional application by all States of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Without this, one can hardly speak about maintaining strategic stability either on the global or the regional level.

All of this adds to the importance of Uzbekistan's initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia and of its rapid endorsement by the international community. We highly appreciate the Secretary-General's support of the activities of the regional expert group working to complete a regional draft treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In considering the entire complex of regional problems, one cannot ignore the issues of ecological security and the environment. Both in the United Nations and in other international forums, I have repeatedly spoken of the problems of the Aral Sea basin. Because of its scope, the Aral crisis has spilled over the boundaries of the Central Asian region; it has become a problem of global importance; its pernicious influence is seen in climate change and biological balance; it has negative effects on health and on the gene pool of future generations.

I believe that no one needs to be persuaded of how dangerous and unpredictable the implications of the dying Aral Sea are for Europe and other areas of the planet, or of the consequences of indifference to this problem. To promote international cooperation in the field of ecological security and to enlist the finances of international institutions and donor countries, I propose the establishment of a council on the problems of the Aral Sea and the Aral basin, under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme.

The current challenges and risks require the dynamic adaptation of the entire United Nations system and its mechanisms to the complicated realities and perspectives and to the elaboration of new approaches to such issues as the maintenance of peace, security and stability. We understand United Nations reform, first, as accomplishing a set of measures to enhance its role and significance in tackling regional and global problems.

In this context, we think it necessary, first, to conduct a phased, gradual reform of the Security Council. The number of its permanent members should be increased to the benefit of developed and developing countries alike. It is expedient to increase the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council. As the first step in this direction, we propose that Germany and Japan be included in the permanent membership of the Security Council, as those countries play a significant role in international affairs and, moreover, are currently the main sponsors of United Nations activities and of numerous humanitarian and charity projects and programmes.

Secondly, in order to make the United Nations reaction to global and regional challenges more operative and effective, we suggest the expansion of the authority of the Secretary-General.

Thirdly, in order to strengthen the role and responsibility of the Security Council in the prevention of military conflicts, instruments and mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of confrontations and disputes must be utilized effectively, in particular through the application of so-called peace-building mechanisms in the course of settling long-term conflicts.

In conclusion allow me to congratulate the Summit Co-Chairpersons, Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, and Ms. Tarja Halonen,

President of the Republic of Finland, on their election to their demanding posts. I am convinced that our Summit will be successful.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by Mr. Bakili Muluzi, President of the Republic of Malawi.

President Muluzi: Let me begin by stating that my country is happy to endorse the Secretary-General's report, which is full of wisdom and insight and sets out the agenda for the United Nations in the years to come. We are especially pleased that the report highlights the many challenges which Africa continues to face and the need for a clear plan of action.

It is a matter of great concern that poverty continues to be a major challenge to humanity. It is a shameful scandal for mankind that so many must live in poverty while others live in extreme wealth. In my country, poverty reduction is the central goal of our policies, but our efforts continue to be hampered by factors beyond our control, including trade imbalances and unpredictable weather patterns resulting in recurrent drought. Today, Malawi's very basis of economic survival, tobacco, is likely to be phased out due to the international anti-smoking initiative. This is compelling my country to face the challenge of economic diversification. We have the will to take on this challenge, but we will need the sympathy and partnership of the wider family of nations.

Like other sub-Saharan African countries, Malawi continues to be weighed down by a crippling debt burden, which we believe is one of the great injustices of our time. Debt-servicing has diverted my country's meagre resources from effectively improving the quality of life of our people. While Malawi appreciates the benefits of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative, we remain convinced that total debt cancellation would help us much better. The money used to service these debts, which were inherited from an earlier generation of leaders, would best be used in our poverty reduction programmes, such as those relating to education, health, sanitation and infrastructures. There is much talk at this forum about poverty reduction, but there cannot be any poverty reduction if the children of Africa remain heavily indebted even before they are born.

Another very serious challenge threatening sub-Saharan Africa's progress is the HIV/AIDS pandemic. During the past decade, HIV/AIDS has inflicted havoc on our modest development plans. Unfortunately, the costs of drugs that help decelerate the impact of HIV/AIDS on patients are very prohibitive. I believe that the international community has a moral obligation and responsibility to ensure that cheaper drugs are available to our poor countries through grants and not loans. I am appealing for grants because our countries already have the burden of external debts hanging like a noose around their necks.

It is also a matter of great concern that conflicts continue to worsen the already existing conditions of poverty in a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In such countries, most resources are being spent on weapons of war and destruction rather than on food for the people. In this regard, Malawi deeply appreciates the tireless efforts the United Nations is making towards the promotion of international peace and security.

We have also observed with concern the factors which seem to impede the Organization's peacekeeping operations. In some parts of Africa, for example, events have clearly shown the need for a strong mandate for peacekeeping missions. It is also evident that the Organization needs a mechanism by which it can take quick decisions on the deployment of peacekeeping missions during emergencies. Malawi therefore welcomes the recommendations of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping operations.

With regard to international trade, difficulties in accessing the markets of the developed countries persist. I believe that the developed countries have a duty to assist us in ensuring that we have the capacity for effective access to global markets and meaningful participation in the globalization process. As long as this much-touted globalization benefits only a few, the world cannot claim to be democratic and those who benefit from such imbalances cannot have a clear conscience.

The people of Malawi will continue to have strong confidence in the United Nations despite the many difficulties it is facing. The United Nations has suffered some reverses, but it can also look back at many triumphs, of which we should all be proud. Long live the United Nations. Long live the unity, peace and progress of mankind.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): Before calling on the next speaker, I must appeal to representatives to be good enough to keep silent in the General Assembly

Hall in order to maintain the dignity of the Assembly and out of courtesy to the speakers.

The Assembly will now hear an address on behalf of the Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino by Captain Regent Her Excellency Mrs. Maria Domenica Michelotti.

Mrs. Michelotti (San Marino) (*spoke in Italian; English text furnished by the delegation*): The Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino wish to express their sincere satisfaction at the convening of the Millennium Summit. Such an event brings together the most distinguished representatives of the international community, who are calling today more than ever for the affirmation of those principles that are the basis of peaceful coexistence among peoples and are essential for the effective implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Internationalization and globalization are by now irreversible, and respect for the cultural and historical identity of each people and individual along with the respect for the universality of human rights is fundamental. That being the case, we favour a multilateral approach, where economic and social development is a shared responsibility and threats to international peace and security are seen as a common concern. The United Nations must play a pivotal role and be the most effective instrument for cohesion and cooperation. To that end, a culture of solidarity and collaboration that guarantees real development for the future — especially for poor countries — is of paramount importance.

At the beginning of this new millennium, fighting poverty and indigence, which afflict a huge number of men and women, is a moral imperative that calls for stronger commitment on the part of the international community. Well aware of the need to rethink the current patterns of development and to reconsider the existing form of international cooperation, the Captains Regent welcome and fully support the report of the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations and the challenges facing the international community in the twenty-first century.

The technological revolution, which brought about radical changes in the life of the twentieth century, cannot provide development opportunities only for industrialized countries. On the contrary, as an instrument of economic and cultural progress, it should also benefit less advantaged countries. Access to digital technologies can therefore play an unexpected and fundamental role in the education of people in areas where traditional infrastructures and services cannot easily be introduced. This new scientific breakthrough will in fact favour closer and intensified relations and ensure developments in a variety of areas, thus bridging the gap between North and South.

Proud of its 1,700 year history, the Republic of San Marino, as a clear example of solidarity, welcomes and is ready to support the United Nations intention to promote and finance projects designed to foster the knowledge of and ensure the use of information technologies in developing countries. San Marino would like to contribute to the training of groups of young volunteers who can guarantee wide access to information technologies for those who at present cannot take advantage of that huge development potential because of their economic and cultural circumstances.

Understandably, the whole of the international community — ourselves included — is now looking at the beginning of the century and of the millennium with a feeling of both hope and concern. It is to be hoped that the globalization process will help free developing countries from the hunger, poverty and excessive foreign debt that are crippling their economies and their development. We are confident that peace will be fostered and protected, thanks to more effective action on the part of international organizations. However, we are deeply concerned about the ongoing cases of local conflict, bloodshed and ethnic and religious intolerance that have dramatically re-emerged over the last few years.

Against that background, the Republic of San Marino has never questioned the central importance of the human being or the need to protect all fundamental rights, including civil and political rights. San Marino is committed to the International Criminal Court. It has strongly supported the abolition of the death penalty worldwide and has continuously participated in international solidarity projects to alleviate the suffering of men, women and children.

The Republic of San Marino, which we represent, believes that the United Nations is essential for the protection of the lofty ideals of peace, justice and respect for the rights of every individual. We believe this because of our conviction that it is only through the continued exercise of its moral authority that the

United Nations can effectively continue to deal in a concerted way with the global issues that are the burdensome legacy of the recent past and a daunting challenge for the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Joseph E. Estrada, President of the Republic of the Philippines.

President Estrada: This meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the United Nations is a watershed in history, and I am distinctly honoured to address it. I am also pleased to congratulate our Co-Chairpersons — His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, and Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland. Under their leadership, the Millennium Summit can be a defining moment in the destiny of our peoples.

We enter the new millennium with the regime of super-Power confrontation behind us. But true peace remains elusive. While the threat of world war has receded, wars and violence between States and within States continue to erupt. The new diversity of the theatres of battle has made the search for global peace much more complex than before. Terrorism recognizes no borders, and ethnic and religious conflicts are a cause of dehumanizing violence. On the other hand, the very uncertainties of our present world provide us with a unique opportunity to make a mark. We, the largest assembly ever of the world's leaders, can make our collective legacy to humanity if we lay the foundations of an international partnership that will truly advance peace in this century.

First, we should adopt preventive diplomacy as the principal global tool for peace. Preventive diplomacy must replace the use of military force. But where the use of force is unavoidable and justified, it should be guided by clearly defined international legal norms and practices. Preventive diplomacy is more cost-effective than peace operations, which are reactive in nature. We should transform the United Nations culture of reaction into a culture of pro-action.

Secondly, we should complete our work on disarmament. Progress notwithstanding, the world remains exposed to nuclear disasters, given the staggering inventories of nuclear weapons around the world.

It is startling to note that while 1.2 billion people struggle to eke out an existence on less than a dollar a day, the world spent $145 per person for military forces in 1997. What is even more distressing is that as militaries amass more deadly weapons, agents of terror can procure theirs with impunity. It is time to deal in a comprehensive manner with the issues of disarmament, small arms proliferation and transnational crime.

Thirdly, we need to pursue the reform of the United Nations with greater vigour. Its most important element is the restructuring of the Security Council, which should become truly representative of all countries. This means expansion of its membership and greater transparency in its work.

We should also provide the Organization with all the resources it needs to do its work. The stability of United Nations operations is incompatible with the uncertainties of its finances. We must all agree to meet faithfully our financial obligations to the United Nations and provide it with the financial security it deserves.

Fourthly, we should work for the universal acceptance of human rights. In the words of the Secretary-General, human rights are foreign to no culture and native to all nations. Stability should not be won by trampling on human rights. Each time an individual's rights are upheld, all of humanity gains. Each time they are violated, all of humanity suffers.

Last but not least, there can be no security amid starvation and poverty. There can be no peace without development, just as there can be no development without peace. Development is a global concern in a world that has become indivisible. Yet, while unprecedented wealth is being created in a few countries, destitution blights most other parts of the world.

The United Nations should be at the centre of efforts to establish a global economy that uplifts all peoples and nations. Our goal is not just a borderless world for the unfettered movement of capital, goods and services. It is to build a global economic regime that builds productive capacity, but not income gaps; that promotes openness instead of corruption; and that rewards enterprise, but not greed.

I take this opportunity to request the leaders of oil-exporting nations to consider rationalizing the price

of crude oil with a view to helping the economies of developing nations.

As we, the leaders of 189 nations, meet at this summit, the world's peoples will want to know what future we are shaping for them, and whether we plan to get there together or separately, as adversaries or as partners.

The five components of common resolve — preventive diplomacy, true disarmament, United Nations reform, promotion of human rights, and equitable global development — are the building blocks of our partnership agenda. We can lay the foundations today through our strong endorsement of the many initiatives the Secretary-General has placed before us. If we do that, 6 billion souls will know that we want the world to have peace, but only with freedom; that we want our peoples to savour prosperity, but only with fairness; and that we want our nations to enjoy stability, but only with openness.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

President Assoumani: Peace. The world needs peace, real peace — a peace that creates conditions for worldwide stability, secures prosperity for our peoples, puts an end to conflicts and to the upheavals that victimize the world's peoples, and, finally, a peace that allows for solidarity and harmony between the most privileged and the most vulnerable.

The Millennium Summit must first of all be a forum where we come together to exchange views and discuss social and economic inequalities and all of the other scourges besetting the world. This Summit has the historic responsibility of charting the course for the nascent millennium.

This millennium must be an era of solidarity, of development, of increased well-being. But what solidarity are we to build, and what relations are we to construct between North and South? What are the conditions that need to be met to bring about a culture of peace where democratic values are respected, keeping in mind that the modalities of implementation cannot be entirely identical between one country and another continent?

No solidarity, no development, no democracy, no good governance can be possible in a world where poverty, ignorance, disease and debt pose a crushing burden to some countries.

I believe that these are the fundamental challenges we are facing today, and it is for that reason that all of our citizens are looking to us here in this forum. Our decisions consequently must meet the expectations placed in us.

The United Nations must be enabled to play its full role as a catalyst in order to lay down solid foundations for a new equilibrium — a new world order based on respect between peoples, the sovereignty of States, and trust and confidence among us all.

The reforms that have been so eagerly awaited must apply to the United Nations system as a whole, and they must embrace the full spectrum of international partnership. To be credible, however, this rush of optimism must be based on the genuine will of the multilateral and bilateral partners. The reforms must go hand in hand with, and in practical terms support, States in their development efforts.

I am very pleased here to see the highest leaders of the world express their willingness to share the joys and the concerns of our peoples about today's realities. I am also pleased to see them stress the increasingly dynamic role that our Organization must play in the maintenance of peace and security. Good-neighbourly relations are better than ever among peoples in this world, driven as it is by a globalization process over which we must exert greater control and which we must make more humane.

This means that the United Nations must listen more attentively to each and every inhabitant of the global village; it must listen constantly, completely, objectively and impartially, in keeping with the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter. When it listens, it must pay heed to the imperative of participation by countries in the decision-making process involving all continents in managing world affairs.

Conflicts anywhere in the world have adverse effects that are not confined to the theatres of crisis. Their consequences are felt world wide. They place a heavy burden on the lives of every citizen. These are always human consequences because they are economic and social in nature. In Africa, the Organization of African Unity is making major efforts

to eliminate the hotbeds of tension that are scourging it. Such activities are costly but necessary. We know that they are necessary, and we know that peace is beyond price. Peace is the responsibility of States; it is our responsibility. I wish here to pay well deserved tribute to our continental organization and to its Secretary-General, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, whose entire focus is on peace in Africa.

But peace is a matter for us all, and therefore calls for local initiatives. The people of Comoros know this, and have put it into practice. The inter-Comorian dialogue, which I myself initiated, gives us hope for a peaceful solution to a crisis that has endured for some three years. I urge the entire international community to support us in this process, which will open the way to a just and equitable solution to the Comorian crisis.

I cannot fail in closing to convey warm congratulations to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, on the in-depth reforms he has undertaken to modernize the Organization and improve its performance. May peace be our objective, and may we be illuminated by its light.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Sir Mekere Morauta, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

Sir Mekere Morauta (Papua New Guinea): It is an honour for me to address the Millennium Summit not only on behalf of Papua New Guinea, but as a citizen of the South Pacific. Although we occupy thousands of islands remote from global centres such as this, new forces unleashed by change, interdependence and globalization remind us that no man is an island. Our future is intertwined with the rest of the world. That is the greatest challenge, and the greatest opportunity, that we have faced. The risks are enormous. Left unmanaged, they threaten our existence.

We have adapted to the first wave of modern change, colonialism and the encroachment of the developed world's ideas and practices. But that was a ripple in a pond compared with what confronts us today. One of our fathers of independence wrote that he had had to deal with 1,000 years of progress in a single lifetime. He was being conservative. In less than 200 years, Papua New Guineans have moved through the metal age and the industrial age and are now grappling with the information age.

But the cyclonic forces unleashed by the information revolution and globalization have created a tidal wave that may drown us. Small States such as Papua New Guinea are already living on the edge. To us, poverty, illiteracy and illness, conflict and crime, environmental devastation and political instability are more than concepts. They are part of our daily lives.

Can the world comprehend the reality of these simple facts and develop new structures and processes to cushion their effects? Pacific island States dependent on natural resources such as fisheries and timber require mechanisms that promote sustainable exploitation. The United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO) should take the lead.

Papua New Guinea remains committed to free trade and investment by 2020. So we were disappointed by the failure to start a new WTO round in Seattle. Talk of new preferential trading arrangements is also disappointing. Once some nations are treated as more equal than others, the weakest will be neglected. There is already an unacceptable wealth gap between the developed and the developing worlds. Allowance must be made for the fact that commitment by vulnerable economies to free trade and investment further exposes them.

We are also concerned at the prospect of new links between trade rights and social and environmental conditions. It is reasonable to expect a commitment to international standards, but it is not reasonable to contemplate sanctions against those that are unable to meet arbitrarily imposed additional criteria.

In the longer term, sustained development requires the Pacific islands to build robust economies. Papua New Guinea has begun to do so, increasing investment in human resources and economic infrastructure. Pacific islands need capital and technology from the developed world. But the funding guidelines and policies of multilateral development and financial institutions need to be more flexible and relevant to our requirements and our capacity.

Our needs are not confined to trade and investment. For many, our very existence as nations will be under threat unless the rising sea level is dealt with at once. Not all Governments have accepted the emissions targets of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and not all will meet the agreed targets. The United

Nations has to orchestrate further efforts with greater urgency and seriousness.

Papua New Guinea must not only adapt to rapid economic, social and environmental transformations. It faces political change to the east and the west that is just as dramatic. It is obvious that mechanisms for dealing with threats to stability are inadequate. They need to be strengthened, not only to resolve conflicts but, more important, to prevent them. Our own experience on Bougainville and our efforts to help the Solomon Islands and Fiji arrive at their own solutions to their crises show that with the cooperation of our neighbours and multinational bodies, progress can be made.

Representative bodies and individual States have too often confronted conflict after the event, commonly with destructive and expensive political and economic weapons. Moreover, it is clear that effective intervention requires an intimate understanding of a domestic society. The adoption of this approach in the South Pacific will be a starting point.

The United Nations itself needs critical self-appraisal. The lack of attention it has paid to the South-West Pacific has already been costly. In particular, the circle of the Security Council needs to be expanded to include a voice for Asia and the Pacific.

All multilateral agencies — not just the agencies of the United Nations — must rebuild their structures and processes to reflect the rapidly changing circumstances of the world, of regions and of individual nations. The price of not doing so is increased human suffering, and that is unacceptable.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Royal Highness Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Kingdom of Tonga.

Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata: This Summit marks an historic milestone that with the hindsight of the past affords us the opportunity to chart the future direction of our Organization by addressing the issues of concern to our Organization and peoples. Accordingly, the outcome of this Summit ought to be meeting our needs and concerns and the realization of our collective aspirations.

I congratulate the Secretary-General on the quality of his report "We the Peoples". He poses for us poignant issues deserving our earnest attention. These range from the new challenges to globalization and freedom from want and fear, to sustaining our future and renewing the United Nations. The report culminates in four significant initiatives: freedom from poverty, freedom from the scourge of war, freedom from the danger of living on a planet spoiled by human activities, and making our Organization a more effective instrument in the hands of the world's peoples. We ought to dedicate our energies, resources and policies to improving education, protecting our environment, bringing an end to poverty, promoting gender equality, increasing security and promoting good governance, human rights and the rule of law. I therefore concur with the issues raised in the report and the initiatives that the Secretary-General sets for the new century to achieve our priorities, and to this end, I see the need for an action-oriented programme.

I welcome the commitment by Member States to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as I do the commitment by the member States of the G-8 to cancel the debt burden of the heavily indebted poor countries. We look forward to this commitment's urgent implementation.

For the past century and a half, Tonga has invested heavily in education. While this has been a boon for us, we now find it altogether imperative that developing countries lock onto the information and communication technologies. In this respect, I welcome the Ministerial Declaration dealing with information technology of the Economic and Social Council.

While my son sees information technology as "the way to go", it is clearly the way to communicate; it is a significant means to enhance the education of all our people, and it enables them to participate in what is happening in the world. This, in part, is also the reason for our support of the SIDSnet. In particular, I welcome the offer of Japan to establish a dedicated information-technology programme in Okinawa and appreciate the resources they have earmarked for that purpose. The offer and the mechanics for its operation are deserving of our thoughtful consideration.

I am cognizant of the special needs of small island developing States, needs that ought to be resolved by implementing the Barbados Programme of Action and the outcomes of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly. Consequently, we call on the international community to make a focused commitment to meeting those needs.

I welcome the inclusion of economic vulnerability as a factor for determining the least-developed-country category, but also recognize that small island developing States are vulnerable to environmental changes. I therefore commend to the delegations the work on the environmental vulnerability index currently being carried out by the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, and I register my appreciation for those Member States who have made available the resources for the completion of this study.

Small island developing States are sea-locked, with the inherent problems that this entails. They are acutely vulnerable to globalization, for the benefits are not yet equally shared and remain prone to the vagaries of market forces. They are ocean-bound, so the efforts to harvest the living and non-living resources of the oceans are especially important to them. Thus, the activities this year and in the immediate future of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, of the open-ended informal consultative process on oceans and the Law of the Sea, and of the International Seabed Authority are of utmost significance to small island developing States, and these activities form the basis for pursuing arrangements that return a fair share of the harvest.

The conclusion of the recent Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference seems to give hope that at some time soon nuclear disarmament might be possible; however, the shipment of nuclear waste through the waters of small island developing States needs to be regularly considered to ensure that it meets the highest international safety standards.

Tonga supports the endeavours of the Security Council and of the General Assembly to find solutions and bring enduring peace to the troubled regions of the world. In supporting the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations, we endorse the call to review the formula for assessing our contribution on the basis of a fair and equitable arrangement and on the principle of capacity to pay. We also commend to the delegations the recommendations of the Brahimi report.

Finally, I support the effort to reform the Security Council through an expansion of the number of permanent seats and non-permanent seats that would include both developed and developing countries in order to reflect today's realities and to deal with today's needs and pressing issues. Without such reform we shall be dealing with today's problems with the machinery of yesteryear.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Mr. Hun Sen: I have prepared a long speech for this Summit with the intention of apprising this forum of our aspirations, needs and concerns with regard to the challenges to the development of the humanity and the creation of a new world order in the age of globalization. I have asked for the distribution of the whole text for the delegations' information.

Overall, there is a common view that humanity has witnessed unimaginable, enormous and immeasurable changes and progress in the last one thousand years, in particular during the last century. Yet our achievements also mask many continuing failings and seem to give rise to more dangers for the future. Many leaders used to highlight these issues at important international forums. May I pick up for comment just a few main concepts, which I think could make a contribution to the discussions at this Millennium Summit.

First, our biggest concerns at this time are to rapidly reduce poverty, the gaps between the rich and poor and the huge economic divide that resulted from the negative impacts of globalization, which is under way and continuing to spread to regions and throughout the world. The most important challenge is to provide opportunity and create conditions for poor countries to benefit appropriately from globalization. This requires greater transfers of financial, technical and technological resources, so as to provide developing countries the opportunity to participate fully and equally in free trade by providing them with favourable access to developed markets without hidden conditionalities and domestic subsidies.

We must consider a new partnership between developed and developing countries to produce measures allowing the latter to meet effectively the challenges of globalization. At the same time, special care should be taken to design policies and establish a favourable environment to promote increased flows of investment, technologies and new knowledge to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries.

Secondly, as one of the poorest countries in the world, we are concerned about the overall decreasing trends of official development assistance. We think that in providing financing facilities, more grant funds should be provided to poor countries to boost development until they reach a minimum threshold. In this sense, we fully support the strides made to fulfil the yet to be attained internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of the developed countries for overall official development assistance as soon as possible.

Thirdly, excessive external debt is a heavy burden for poor countries and constitutes a major impediment to economic growth and investment in their human resource development. The G-8 countries have agreed to write off the heavy burden of outstanding debt of the poorest countries. This initiative has been warmly welcomed by the people of all walks of life and should be further developed by providing extra funds to help the heavily indebted poor countries and by expanding its coverage to many other poor countries.

In this regard, a number of countries, including Cambodia, have made the utmost efforts to reschedule old debts, especially those contracted in the 1970s. It is, however, regrettable that these debts were contracted during the cold war to finance the hot wars in the country and the region. Under those circumstances, most of the loans were not utilized for development. Therefore, there should be political will to write off these debts. Some countries appear to have shared this vision and have adopted this approach by not requiring payback. At the same time, we highly appreciate the generosity of donor countries and international financial institutions in granting new concessional loans to poor countries, such as Cambodia, to promote development and reduce poverty.

Fourthly, human resource development is the most important and decisive factor for development and social progress. Thus, priority should be given to the enhancement of the capacities of the least developed countries, such as Cambodia, for them to achieve the ultimate goals of social and economic development and to participate effectively and equally in regional and world affairs.

Fifthly, Cambodia agrees with the initiative to push for the creation of a new world order by establishing a new institution and putting forward a new agenda, or improving and redirecting the existing one in order to ensure that all developing countries can benefit fairly and equitably from globalization. This also includes the necessity to reform the United Nations. The reform of the Security Council should be conducted in a spirit which allows the United Nations to discharge its responsibilities in determining the destiny of the world more efficiently and with full legitimacy in the eyes of nations and peoples in all regions and at all levels of development. In this sense, Cambodia welcomes the initiative of expanding the membership of the Security Council, and expresses full support for Japan and India as candidates to occupy permanent seats on the Security Council.

I am confident that this Millennium Summit will reaffirm the commitments of all Member States in respect of the common visions for the world in the new millennium. We will all show our strong determination about this commitment through follow-up actions to be taken after the Summit.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Göran Persson, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden.

Mr. Persson (Sweden): We are living at a historic juncture where global progress is a real possibility: a combined wealth never seen before; scientific advances in medicine and technology; political freedom and democratic accountability becoming the norm; an end to the belief that States have inherent enemies; access to many cultures and the inspiration of diversity; and social liberation for entire populations, and for women in particular.

There are good reasons for optimism, or even pride, but not for satisfaction. Human progress should be measured not by the achievements of the most privileged, but by the life that the most disadvantaged among us can live and enjoy.

We are painfully aware that a great part of humankind is left behind progress, each and every day having to struggle for survival and justice. Poverty is the prime challenge of this Summit and the backdrop of all international efforts.

We, the peoples, have enough knowledge and resources to act as responsible citizens of the world. Our task as leaders is to provide the political, social and economic context.

Representing one of the richer countries in the world, known for its stable democratic tradition, I have to highlight a threat to our ability to take common responsibility. In many democracies, democracy itself is questioned. Too many do not care to vote and resent political participation. Social rifts and unemployment are sowing distrust. Dark forces of racism and anti-semitism are harvesting support. Some blame unfettered globalization and come to hail insular nationalism.

This Summit can point in a more hopeful direction. It can become a reference for all those willing to act together for a better future. The future is not decreed by fate; it is people in cooperation that shape it.

The choice is ours. Some say that equality is a brake on development. But take a look around: nations that put the tools of development in the hands of all people are making more lasting progress. A well-educated population, fair distribution of income, a social safety system encouraging enterprise and mobility — those are keys to success in the new economy.

And now globalization calls for a wider social contract, making market forces serve people better.

When home again, can we match words with deeds? Systematic efforts and consistent political will are essential. Our Secretary-General is providing invaluable and persistent leadership. His Millennium Report serves as an excellent reference for checking whether our homework has been properly done.

Have we come closer to halving extreme poverty by 2015? This is a goal for which debt relief is necessary. What about providing clean drinking water and air? Or education for all children, investing as much in girls as in boys? Are we responding well enough to disastrous climate change and killer diseases like HIV/AIDS? Are we tackling organized crime and corruption? Do we respect the free will of our people, enforcing universally applicable human rights? Do we seek to encourage participation in new and old democracies alike? What about guarding conventions we have signed, disarming as we have declared, and preventing conflicts or resolving them with arguments rather than arms?

The United Nations needs the renewed strength of peoples' trust and their mandate in order to be a purposeful organization with adequate resources. Are we paying our fees before profiting? Are we honouring our commitments to aid development? And to peacekeeping, a duty well spelled out in the Brahimi report, which deserves everyone's full support.

Colleagues, the answer should be a resounding — Yes! There is no room for hesitation. Only resolute steps taken down these already agreed upon paths can restore confidence in the unity of nations to defend humanity — all of humanity.

Present and aspiring members of the reformed, enlarged Security Council that we need must live up to the trust we place in them — a restricted veto — a farewell to nuclear arms — more sophisticated sanctions.

Equality and development go hand in hand. Development will be stronger when everyone is part of it. We will all be better off if no one is left out. We have a future, we have it in common. This should be the powerful message of the Millennium Summit.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Mr. Rasmussen (Denmark): The United Nations is the sum of our efforts, our commitments, our contributions. The United Nations is what member countries make it. Our guiding light should be equal worth and social fairness for everybody. The Secretary-General has delivered, to my mind, the analysis of the global trends we face. The Secretary-General has made a strong case for the future of the United Nations. Global problems have to be tackled globally; therefore, we need a stronger United Nations.

Let me add that globalization cannot only be larger markets. Around the world, untold millions live in poverty, at the outskirts of change, where the future seems a dead-end street. Africa, in particular, seems locked in a vicious circle of desolation and despair. No one — no one — can justify fatalistic and cynical acceptance. We must act; and we must support Africa's renaissance. Investments, transfer of knowledge and resources are necessary for development in Africa.

We need to create a human framework for the international market forces of the economy, as we have done in our national economies. We need to put people before money and the market. When multinational

corporations make money at the expense of social progress, we have an obligation to provide the right balance. There can never be an exchange rate between money and human suffering.

At the Copenhagen Summit in 1995, poverty and social progress were at the top of the development agenda. May I underline that only if the private and the public sectors work hand-in-hand to ensure an even distribution of the benefits will we be able to realize the truly global promise of globalization.

The United Nations is what we, the leaders, want it to be. Our support forms the destiny of the United Nations. We need to do more.

I welcome the emphasis on global solidarity and social responsibility in the Secretary-General's report. The least developed countries need action on trade, debt, and aid in order to catch up. Developing countries should enjoy the advantages of international trade. Substantially improved market access for their products — and in my view, all their products — should be at the centre of the upcoming World Trade Organization (WTO) Round. Everybody should honour the demands and requirements of the International Labour Organization (ILO) concerning labour rights. We, from the richer part of the world, should assist developing countries to realize those concerns.

Debt relief has the potential to make substantial resources available for investment in poverty reduction, education, and health. Both bilaterally and multilaterally, creditors should cover their share of the costs. The long-term decline in aid needs to be reversed. Far — and I underline, far — too few countries live up to our modest commitment. If Denmark, my country, can meet and exceed the targets, others may as well. The United Nations process of financing for development offers an opportunity for renewed commitment and action. The Secretary-General can count on our support.

But I also have to underline that debt, aid or trade are not separate issues. Improving one and cutting back on another is meaningless. We can only make development sustainable if we take a coherent approach. Therefore, I urge those countries that could really make a difference — countries among the most developed and fortunate — to make an extra effort.

Following the Rio Summit in 1992, it is evident that sustainable development is the sum of many parts, including social, economic and environmental aspects.

Heads of State and Government should come together and discuss the next steps to be taken. We must promote an agenda for further cooperation with a stronger emphasis on the needs of the developing countries. We have to narrow the gap between rich and poor. This requires a major effort by the industrialized countries and, let us be honest at this Millennium Summit, too many times we have set new deadlines to reach old goals. Now is the time to act. Now is the time to let action follow words.

Effective cooperation requires solidarity and a strong, well-functioning United Nations. We want an effective United Nations capable of meeting its mandate. We need reforms and dues need to be paid by everybody. That includes both small and big nations.

The Secretary-General deserves credit for making the United Nations both leaner and more effective. His quiet revolution of 1997 must maintain momentum. Now is the time to dismantle obsolete bodies and activities. The Secretary-General can count on Denmark's support.

Reform of the Security Council is overdue as well. The number of both permanent and elected members reflects the past. It should reflect the present and the future.

The United Nations needs a sizeable and robust capacity for peace operations. It must be able to respond quickly and with credible force. The report from Ambassador Brahimi's panel provides both a strong case and frank recommendations for putting things right. The Secretary-General can count on our support. And let me add that those committed individuals who every day serve the United Nations as peacekeepers or humanitarian workers have a right, a right to safety and protection. The very recent atrocious murders in West Timor is another sad reminder of this need.

But preventive actions should always come first. Thus, I am pleased to announce, therefore, that a Danish contribution of $1 million to the Trust Fund for Preventive Action has been decided.

For almost half a century, the United Nations has remained our pre-eminent common forum for promoting peace and social progress. In this spirit I

welcome the recent landmark decision to establish a permanent forum for indigenous issues.

May I conclude by saying that it would be unfair to blame the United Nations for having failed our expectations. The fact remains that only if we, the leaders of the world, are ready, individually and collectively, to take action, only if we give the United Nations the necessary authority and adequate resources, only then can we move forward towards a better world for all.

Let us recognize today that we can do better, all of us, together.

As I said in my introduction, the United Nations is the sum of our efforts, our commitments and our contributions.

Denmark remains ready to assume her share of this responsibility and I urge all colleagues to do the same.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency, the Honourable Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta.

Mr. Fenech-Adami (Malta): Homer, the first great poet of humanity, chose the state of siege as the basic image of the human condition in his first epic, the Iliad. He later moved to another metaphor for human life in his second epic, the Odyssey, where human existence becomes a sea voyage as opposed to one marked by the stagnation and corruption which can so often produce war.

I believe that there has been a somewhat similar change in the world's self-image as indicated in the Secretary-General's report. The root of this change clearly stems from a desire to distance ourselves from the siege mentality out of which the Organization was inevitably born, and to begin the new Millennium aware that we — the whole of humanity — are embarked on the same voyage, on the same ship, and with very similar, if not precisely, the same goals.

The Secretary-General's report also embodies full recognition of the interconnectedness of the economic, environmental and ethical dimensions of global security. It focuses on current developments that, to a large extent, may be termed issues of common interest, issues that form part of the common heritage of mankind. The Summit commitment to ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence is indeed very welcome in this regard.

Globalization is clearly and rapidly emerging as an impressive force that offers potentially positive opportunities in the economies of the world. It is, however, not a panacea that can be expected to resolve all the challenges caused by underdevelopment. The benefits therefrom, if equitably distributed, could and would help the healing process of the wounds opened by the devastating consequences of underdevelopment and poverty.

Globalization has served to heighten our interdependence. It has helped us to realize that no country's problems are strictly its own. Its onset has, however, coincided with changes in our manifestations of the value of solidarity. At home many of us are reassessing the viability of our welfare systems while abroad official development assistance has fallen rather than risen.

Globalization must not be allowed to overwhelm our value of solidarity but rather allow for a new vision of this fundamental value for the new century. Solidarity must have new manifestations whereby advances in various fields, including those of science and medicine, are shared because in an interdependent world it is in our common interest that they are so shared.

We have to act swiftly to prevent a widening of the digital divide between the globalized few and the marginalized many. Failing to do so would ensure the further exacerbation of the scourge of poverty that often, indeed too often, is the root cause of most conflicts.

Equally important is the reaffirmation of our commitment to the United Nations and its Charter as the foundation of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. Our final declaration at this Millennium Summit carries with it a commitment to make the United Nations a more effective instrument, an instrument that can promote the forces necessary for change. To ensure that the United Nations can do this, however, it has to have the necessary means at its disposal.

At present, the United Nations is effecting both internal and external reforms to ensure that it has adequate resources to meet its mandates. An area, which exacts an ever-increasing demand on resources, is the United Nations peacekeeping role. I would like

to express Malta's support for the initiatives under way in this respect. I hereby signal our intention to significantly increase our peacekeeping contribution through a voluntary move from group C to group B.

I would also like to offer Malta's commitment to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, scheduled for late next year. My Government undertakes not only to sign the declaration entitled "Tolerance and diversity — A vision for the 21st century", but also to ensure that we have a valid and relevant contribution to make at the convening of that Conference.

I would like to end by confirming Malta's commitment to the underlying principles of this Organization and our trust that this Millennium Summit will provide the impetus to ensure that the United Nations becomes a more effective instrument in the hands of we, the peoples of the United Nations, not solely in words but also in deeds.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India.

Mr. Vajpayee (India) (*spoke in Hindi, interpretation provided by the delegation*): It gives me great pleasure to address the Millennium Summit of the United Nations. My heartiest congratulations to both of the Co-Chairpersons.

We are gathered here to voice the aspirations and dreams of 6 billion people for the twenty-first century. We cannot have development without peace between nations and democracy within them. Peace, democracy and development secure each other.

The danger of nuclear war remains a serious threat to global peace and security in the new era whose arrival is marked by this Summit. During the last half of the century gone by, India was at the forefront of the campaign for universal nuclear disarmament, but we raised our voice to no avail. India was forced to develop these weapons in 1998 because the principal nuclear-weapon States refused to accept the almost-universal demand for disarmament. Moreover, the spread of nuclear weapons in our neighbourhood made us especially vulnerable.

India's bitter experience has taught it that it has to be strong to defend peace. Nevertheless, our policy is based on responsibility and restraint, and our commitment to universal, verifiable nuclear disarmament remains undiminished. We support the Secretary-General's proposal for an international conference to address nuclear dangers.

Of all threats to democracy, development and peace in our times, the most diabolic is international terrorism, with its links to religious extremism, drug trafficking and commerce in illicit arms. Terrorism feeds on violence against innocent people and seeks to undermine pluralistic, open societies.

Standing before this gathering of leaders who have come together to chart a new course of international cooperation in the twenty-first century, I call upon the international community to act against terrorism before it is too late. We urge the early adoption and implementation of the comprehensive convention against terrorism that will be negotiated at the session of the General Assembly that follows this Summit.

Many statesmanlike words have been delivered from this high tribune. Unfortunately, some of them are a mockery of the truth. The world must see reality as it is. The acid test of sincerity of purpose is not words but deeds. Terrorism and dialogue do not go together.

In the last half-century, the world has changed, as has the international order. But these changes are not reflected in the structure of the Security Council, which will continue to have a rather special role to play in the new century. Therefore, it is necessary that the Security Council should be more representative of the new realities. India is ready to play its role in an expanded Security Council.

This is a unique Summit, being held at a unique point in history. As the world transits from one era to another, let us pledge to bring nations together in a global family, united by peace and prosperity.

I end with an ancient Indian invocation:

May all live happily

May all enjoy good health

May all see auspiciousness

May none experience distress

May peace prevail everywhere!

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Yeshey Zimba, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Mr. Zimba (Bhutan): It gives me great pleasure to felicitate the two leaders who have been elected to jointly and equally preside over the Millennium Summit. Their representation of separate geographic regions and cultural and economic backgrounds is an expression of our collective will to usher in an era of greater understanding, peace and cooperation in international relations.

I would also like to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his concise report, which is both reflective and stimulating. It fulfils the expectation of a comprehensive basis for our common endeavour to envision the future of our planet in the new century.

It is now five years since we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and a new millennium has begun. Yet the world is still not rid of the scourge of war, and there continues to prevail those very causes which compel sections of our society to seek change through the perpetration of violence against each other. These include insecurity, inequities, poverty and despair. But does this mean that the United Nations has failed? Certainly not.

For all its imperfections, the United Nations is an institution for which there is no alternative. It has given hope in times of instability, crisis and war. For the smaller and more vulnerable nations, the world body has served to safeguard sovereignty and freedom. Above all, the United Nations today is vital to the promotion and conduct of international relations and behaviour. The wisdom of committing ourselves to the strengthening of our Organization must therefore be upheld.

Against this backdrop, I would urge that the time has come to do more than pay lip service to the reform and expansion of the Security Council. Let us work to make it happen. Let us ensure that, among other things, the United Nations is on firm financial footing and that there is equitable geographic representation of permanent members in the Council.

Globalization is a revolution that is all-embracing and irreversible. We in Bhutan accept it as a natural outcome of the continuing evolution of human society, accelerated by the miracles of technology. We believe that, just as all human institutions and cultural expressions are of our own making, so must the direction, pace and impact of globalization be guided to ensure that it serves to enhance our greater common interests and values.

The alleviation of material poverty and spiritual hunger, which undermine human dignity and the value of human life, remains a great challenge for all our Governments. We see people-centred, holistic development as an effective way to overcome the problem. In this context, Bhutan has evolved a philosophy and concept of development aimed at promoting "gross national happiness" — not just simply gross national product. Besides socio-economic development under conditions of equity and sustainability, it prescribes environmental conservation, the promotion of basic human values and good governance. It requires that, in the process of promoting development and ensuring freedom from the uncertainty of survival and want of basic needs, humanity must not lose its soul.

When we speak about the eradication of poverty, peacekeeping, or the promotion of socio-economic development, finance is a constraining factor, not because of an absolute lack of it, but for want of a greater political will to share available resources. In this regard, we must not be oblivious to the diminishing role and capacity of the United Nations, due mainly to lack of support and funds. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to thank and commend the few developed countries that have met or surpassed the internationally agreed official development assistance annual disbursement target of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product, and we appeal to others to do the same.

Peace and security are prerequisites for human creativity and productivity. These are the foundations for social and economic advancement. This Summit is historic not only in the context of the new millennium but because of the affirmation of the relevance and importance of this world body by the largest-ever number of heads of State or Government in its history. This, then, is the moment to rededicate and commit our countries and peoples to the high aims and ideals of the United Nations. Let this be the occasion from which will rise a more purposeful, strong and effective United Nations — a United Nations that will succeed in

creating the preconditions for human growth and happiness.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Julio César Franco, Vice-President of the Republic of Paraguay.

Mr. Franco (Paraguay): It is a great pleasure for me — as well as for my country, Paraguay — to be here in this Hall and to participate in this lofty forum of heads of State and representatives, who are gathered here with the goal of establishing a link between policy-making and deliberation.

The beginning of this millennium is more than just a date in history. It is providing us with the opportunity to rethink our policies and to anticipate the changes our countries will have to make in order to achieve a level of sustainable development that respects human dignity and the need to preserve the ecosystem.

The recognition of the need for reform and to effect change, both domestically and internationally, is a sign of the times. The complexity of our global world is such that nothing is certain and nothing is stable. Global society requires us to adopt a development model in our countries that not only takes account of our comparative advantages but also attaches importance to the development of competitive advantages.

Developing countries such as mine, with their weak infrastructures, must be prepared to meet the challenges of a global society that is characterized by a political and military hierarchy, social stratification and asymmetrical interdependence.

Without discounting the external factors that negatively affect our development opportunities, I would urge that countries with a more limited capacity, such as mine, elaborate a development strategy that enhances the capacity of our domestic institutions.

We need to focus on our endogenous processes and enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. Our challenge is to create institutional models and adopt political management styles that will enable us, from a comprehensive development perspective, to promote public policies that give priority to economic growth, the equitable distribution of wealth, environmental preservation and the achievement of gender equality.

We must reaffirm our commitment to the human development paradigm. This will require us to rethink and re-evaluate the mechanisms and courses of action necessary for us to set up institutional arrangements that promote social participation, give greater responsibility to civil society and establish machinery that will enable us to transform, in an equitable manner, our individual and collective efforts into social progress.

We must focus with all our will on preparing a model for society in which political stability and economic growth leave no room for inequality and social exclusion. The immediate target of our collective effort must be on meeting social demands. Poverty and marginalization violate the principles of the ethic of solidarity, obstruct opportunities for democratic development and stifle the will and the progressive and entrepreneurial spirit of our societies. The breakdown of society internalizes the sense of irrelevance, the anomy, of national communities and weakens individual commitment to the common, collective future. Societies that lose their sense of identity are less able to rise to the challenge of global capitalism.

In that context, I take this opportunity to reiterate Paraguay's position with regard to the entry of the Republic of China on Taiwan as a full Member in the United Nations. Paraguay requests once again that this democratic and progressive country be made part of the United Nations system.

Similarly, we believe that the re-establishment of dialogue between the United Kingdom and the Argentine Republic on the Malvinas Islands is essential to finding a peaceful and lawful solution to that problem.

Finally, I wish to refer once more to the dawn of the new millennium. At the start of any new era, optimism struggles with pessimism. There are reasons for skepticism and justification for the disillusionment of those who claim there is no hope. We believe that there is a need to enhance the quality of our policy-making and we need to consider that this involves more than a mere struggle for power. It requires us to focus on creating material and moral conditions that are not hostile to the full exercise of human rights in this world.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Mrs. Lydie

Poiter, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg.

Mrs. Poiter (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): The gathering in New York of the leaders of the peoples of our planet is a powerful gesture, because it broadcasts the image of a common will, an affirmation of unity and the interdependence of our nations.

This meeting is important. We need landmarks to appreciate what unites us and to measure the distances that separate us. If they can be measured, they become less daunting.

Kofi Annan spoke to us of the potential of freedom in the face of fear, hunger, disease and ignorance. Will the wise man be heard? Societies long ago defined the instrument that provides a lasting hold over the happiness that wisdom brings: these are rights and their issue, the law — not the law of the strongest, but that which defines and accepts partners equal in rights. International legality, on which the actions of international society are based, is certainly not an immutable principle. International society, like the societies of different States, is constantly evolving. It is up to us to ensure that our actions and the instruments available to us to implement them are adequately adapted.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the aspiration to peace and prosperity remains at the heart of our commitment, while many sources of tension persist throughout the world. In recent decades, our Organization has developed its activities to control these crises, either by deploying United Nations peacekeeping operations or by launching international crisis-management actions in cooperation with regional organizations. The results of these efforts have been mixed and should be critically assessed with a view to improving their effectiveness in the future. The role of the United Nations, however, cannot be limited to that of an international fire brigade.

With the Brahimi report, our Organization has undertaken a global exercise of reflection on the way in which it addresses conflict and we must develop a global international crisis-management strategy on the basis of this reflection. We will need greater imagination and perseverance and to devote our joint efforts to improving conflict prevention.

One of the best ways of achieving this objective in the years to come will be to pursue our action on behalf of balanced and sustainable development, which reduces disparities between the various continents and which will be reflected in an effective improvement of the living standards of the populations concerned. In this context, the fight against poverty is one of the central axes of international action. I wish to inform the Assembly that, beginning this year, my country will devote 0.7 per cent of its gross national product to official development assistance programmes.

The ongoing process of the globalization of the economy should offer new opportunities to working and thinking people and to entrepreneurial freedom in the context of systems that are better balanced and endowed with effective self-monitoring mechanisms. Globalization will be a success only if the international community can develop the regulatory framework necessary to give countries and social groups a more harmonious and equitable access to the incredible opportunities offered by communication technologies.

The promotion of the values of peace, justice and solidarity is another essential pillar of United Nations action. In the course of recent years, our Organization has striven to codify through international conventions the principal rights and duties that permit the development of democratic and tolerant societies which accept differences and respect the individual.

Indeed, the tragedies that continue to afflict far too many regions of our planet result not from the differences between individuals and peoples, but from the lack of respect of some for others. Contempt and denial of equality are incompatible with the building of a stable society, be it at the national or the international level.

Without a deep-rooted sense of equality, how can we imagine authentic, sincere and staunch harmony between groups and peoples, regions and countries, nations and States? Without a confidence rooted in the most diverse cultures, languages and traditions, how can we bring ourselves to accept an outstretched hand? How can we act without trust, how can we share the burden of decision-making without mutual recognition?

It will be up to the instrument of the United Nations system — which is incomparable because universal — to endow itself with the means to ensure that these rights and values are effectively implemented and benefit those for whom they are destined. In order to discharge better in the future the important tasks that

have been assigned to it, the United Nations will have to pursue and intensify the internal reform that has been begun and overhaul relations between its various organs: the General Assembly, where we all meet together; the Security Council, which should be enlarged in order to be more representative; and the Economic and Social Council, which should be revitalized.

But the responsibility for this necessary effort of adaptation cannot be limited to the initiative of our Secretary-General and to the work and commitment of our representatives here in New York. Such a commitment must necessarily concentrate the determination of Governments and will also require the cooperation and assistance of civil society, whose contribution is invaluable.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope that the Millennium Summit will be an important stage along the road to the achievement of our common objective of an international society that is more just, more equitable and more tolerant, and has greater solidarity, for the common good of the peoples of the world.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Eriya Kategaya, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uganda.

Mr. Kategaya (Uganda): This is a historic moment ripe with opportunities and challenges. The last hundred years have seen tremendous developments in science and technology, and man has made significant progress. Yet at the same time the majority of humankind still does not enjoy the fruits of that progress, for a number of reasons, one being the lack of peace and another poverty.

We, the leaders gathered here, have an obligation to ensure that a conducive environment for peace is created and sustained. We must therefore deal seriously with the root causes of conflict and act to prevent those causes by promoting good governance and accessibility of opportunities for every citizen.

The international community must remember that the most horrendous violations of human rights in this century, the Holocaust against the Jews and the genocide in Rwanda and Kosovo, were the creation of a leadership that instigated ethnic hatred and religious intolerance. We must therefore collectively develop zero tolerance for such leadership. In the words behind the United Nations Charter "Never again" must be "Never again".

Poverty eradication is yet another challenge that we face. The majority of people living in poverty are in developing countries. The celebrated globalization presents many opportunities, but has always presented unfair terms of trade. In our view, globalization has always existed. The era of the slave trade, when human beings were exchanged for trinkets and whisky, was a form of globalization, but an unfair one. It was an exchange of value for no value. What is needed, therefore, are fair terms of trade.

However, fair terms of trade are not enough. For us, as developing countries, the era of being mere producers of raw materials must come to an end. We must focus on adding value to all goods before putting them on the market. This, in our view, is the only way everybody can benefit from globalization and, in the long run, eradicate poverty. We must work to ensure that nobody continues to live in abject poverty. Globalization should not leave any country or anybody behind.

With respect to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, it is our experience that this is a multisectoral problem that thrives best in poverty. It is therefore not surprising that the most alarming rates of HIV/AIDS infection are in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Poor diet and poor medical services or a lack of them, contribute to making the situation worse. Even where medical facilities are available, the cost of drugs is so prohibitive that only a few privileged people can afford treatment. There is therefore a need for a deliberate effort to make these drugs affordable. This is our moral obligation.

Although, we would not like to advocate debt forgiveness per se, the debt burden is a real problem, because the resources spent on repaying the debts should be used for investing in poverty eradication programmes, education and health. We also need to mobilize new and additional resources to address such issues as appropriate technological transfers, increasing agricultural productivity and, most urgently, the industrialization of developing countries and their transformation from largely peasant societies into middle-class societies.

While welcoming the recent initiative by the G-7 to significantly reduce the debt burden of highly

indebted countries, the initiative itself is not a panacea for the problems of development. The relief will provide the poor countries with the fiscal resources to increase spending on poverty eradication programmes, but the effective exit from debt problems will require rich countries to open up their markets to exports from poor countries.

In the medium- and long-run, what will get poor countries out of the aid/poverty trap is investment and trade. The private sectors of developing countries must be promoted and strengthened. Therefore, developed countries must fully open their markets to us. However, highly indebted poor countries should increase their production capacity so that once there is market access there are goods available for supply. It goes without saying that without the availability of goods, trade is impossible. Countries cannot trade what they do not produce.

The lesson to be learned from our experience in Uganda is that debt relief is necessary to free up resources for investment and poverty eradication. But, if it is to be effective in improving economic and social conditions in the poorest countries, it must be accompanied by sound domestic economic and budgetary policies.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Surin Pitsuwan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

Mr. Pitsuwan (Thailand): Allow me first to commend the far-sighted initiative of the Secretary-General in organizing this historic Millennium Summit and producing a most insightful report (A/54/2000) which serves as an excellent basis for our current deliberations. On the whole, Thailand is supportive of the principles and recommendations laid out in the Secretary-General's timely report, "We the peoples ...", particularly his emphasis on human-centred development. The report rightly identifies the new challenges confronting us all as we enter the new century.

In Thailand's view, such challenges are of far-reaching magnitude and scope, ranging from a complex phenomenon such as globalization all the way to the more immediate problem of high energy and oil prices on the present world market. We in Thailand are deeply concerned about the negative repercussions of high oil prices on the global economy. It is our earnest hope that the international community will be able to find a mutually satisfactory resolution to this problem before it gets out of hand and leads to another worldwide economic crisis.

As we prepare to face the intricate challenges of the twenty-first century, we must all do our part to make this a better world in which to live. As far as Thailand is concerned, we have striven to play a constructive role and to make a meaningful contribution to global peace and prosperity.

In the international arena, Thailand has sought to play a proactive role in achieving a more just and equitable global order. In this quest, our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce, Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, will be assuming the post of Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in September 2002. We also helped foster the "Spirit of Bangkok" during the successful tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) earlier this year in our common effort to forge better understanding and help bridge the dangerous gap between the developed and developing countries.

Along the same lines, Thailand also supports the convening of a high-level international intergovernmental event on financing for development at the highest level possible next year, in the belief that such a conference would help address the national, international and systemic issues relating to financing for development in a holistic manner.

In the political sphere, Thailand has strongly supported and participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations in virtually all regions of the world. We are honoured that a Thai military officer, Lieutenant-General Boonsrang Niumpradit, has been appointed Force Commander of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor.

Thailand also welcomes the recent release of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, headed by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. We look forward to the implementation of many of the practical recommendations proposed by the Panel with a view to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to conduct efficient peacekeeping operations and mount a quick response to potential threats to international security.

As the primary organ responsible for maintaining international peace and stability, the Security Council

must also be reformed to enable it to carry out its tasks more effectively. In line with the increased membership of, and mounting challenges to, this world Organization over the decades, Thailand supports the expansion of Security Council membership in both permanent and non-permanent seats, based on the principle of equitable geographical representation, efficiency and readiness to share the responsibilities.

In closing, I would like to reiterate Thailand's support for the Secretary-General's millennium report and our pledge to work with the international community in realizing the practical recommendations contained in it. It is our earnest hope that the outcome of the deliberations at this historic Millennium Summit will help chart a new course for closer partnership among all nations, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, parliaments and private corporations in the quest for a better and brighter future for all of us and for posterity.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdurrahman Shalghem, Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Shalghem (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: As we meet at this historic Summit in an attempt to formulate an appropriate vision for the future of humanity in the next millennium, we express the hope that the past century — with all of its scientific achievement and progress in all fields, as well as the negative impact it has had on peoples and on the environment — will provide us with guidelines to shape our aspirations and our dreams of a world that is free from oppression, exploitation, the destruction of the planet and nature, the marginalization of millions of people and disrespect for human rights.

We believe that the foundation of the world of the new millennium must be the achievement of equality for all human beings, the prevention of all forms of discrimination and the consecration of the human being as the most valuable and precious creature on earth. On this basis, greater attention must be accorded to children's health and education. Children must be provided with circumstances that allow them to grow up to be healthy, creative, free and strong human beings. This desirable state of affairs will require laws that safeguard the rights of mothers and their children and the right of every human being to his or her own home and to be a partner in shaping his or her own life.

In order to prevent the return of colonialism, the colonizing States should compensate the peoples they colonized for the persecution inflicted on them, the destruction caused to their environment and the plundering of their resources and cultural properties.

The objective behind the establishment of the International Criminal Court is the punishment of the perpetrators of the most serious crimes against humanity and against international security. However, the Rome Statute is designed to try only the weak. Such a Statute cannot be accepted, and neither can it be signed or ratified unless it is modified in a manner that guarantees that justice is meted out to all those who perpetrate acts of aggression, drug smugglers and their trade partners, those responsible for mass killings of innocent people, and those who commit aggression against international forces.

The Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction deals only with simple weapons of limited effect. As a third-world people, unable to defend our borders and our lands against powerful nations that possess aircraft carriers and aircraft that refuel during flights, we believe that humanity should be more preoccupied with the destruction of nuclear, chemical, biological and ballistic weapons rather than with mines, which are a simple type of weapon.

Terrorism has taken on many forms. Internationally imposed sanctions and external debt are forms of terrorism. The use and the threat of use of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction all constitute forms of terrorism, as do the conditions imposed by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization. Therefore, in order for the international community to combat terrorism, we should first and foremost define it and its causes as well as all acts of violence.

In this respect, it is imperative that the following principles be upheld.

First, a distinction must be made between the various forms of terrorism and peoples' struggle for freedom, as well as the struggle waged by persecuted

groups against their oppressors, which is seen by some as terrorism.

Secondly, all States must undertake to accept the repatriation of all persons living in exile and all refugees and to guarantee their safety and assist them in resettling.

Thirdly, compensation must be provided for peoples, as well as individuals and their families, that fall victim to terrorism and violence.

Fourthly, all abducted persons and detainees must be released, and all persons being sought by the international police must be surrendered.

Mr. Tuomioja (Finland) took the Chair.

Without agreement on all such issues, it is certain that the signing or ratification of any international convention or agreement on international terrorism will be to no avail.

The creation of a world in which prosperity prevails requires commitment to the implementation of international agreements on maternal and child care and protection. And a world free from aggression and hostilities requires the prohibition of all manifestations of violence. Furthermore, in order to achieve a world free from epidemics and disease, we need to fight vigorously against dangerous diseases such as cancer, AIDS, poliomyelitis and malaria. There must also be an effort to combat the use of "white poisons" — cocaine and heroin — and the treatment of addicts. Moreover, in order to protect our planet from the dangers that threaten it, we should work to stop desertification and to eradicate crop pests. We should also strive to establish low-cost water desalination systems. Here, we propose the creation of a United Nations fund to which all countries would contribute.

Meeting Africa's special needs means refraining from exploiting its resources, plundering its riches and squandering its wealth. It also requires non-interference in its internal affairs, and ceasing to impose on the African continent concepts that are alien to its culture and traditions. Furthermore, States which colonized Africa and enslaved its peoples must apologize to the continent and pay full compensation for the damages inflicted by colonialism.

We feel that the United Nations cannot play an effective role in meeting the challenges posed by international problems unless it undergoes a radical reform compatible with its Charter. For this reason, the resolutions of the General Assembly must be binding. The Assembly must also exercise control over all other United Nations organs, including the Security Council, which must be accountable to the Assembly. The Council should act as an executive tool for the implementation of General Assembly resolutions. The Assembly should approve the resolutions adopted by the Security Council. The right of veto should also be subject to review in a manner that leads either to its abolition or to its possession by the general membership of the Council.

The United Nations should establish subcommittees covering most parts of the world and responsible for the inspection, implementation and follow-up of United Nations programmes.

That is our vision of how the world should look in the third millennium. We need a world in which peace and security have been achieved, in which stability and prosperity have been enhanced, in which disease, ignorance and poverty have been eradicated, and, first and foremost, in which the will of all peoples is respected.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Muratbek Imanaliev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Imanaliev (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): We had been looking forward to the opening of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly: the Millennium Assembly. It was expected that the discussions would be about the future of mankind — and today's discussions are indeed about the future, which depends on us. It is highly desirable that long-term positive results and favourable consequences for all peoples should flow from the ideas and recommendations of this global forum.

The people of Kyrgyzstan are impressed by the concepts and the concrete proposals set out by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, in his report entitled "We, the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century" (A/54/2000). We also agree with his point that the Millennium Summit gives world leaders an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the United Nations in keeping with the tasks of the twenty-first century.

The United Nations has always been a unique global forum. In keeping with its universal character and with historic agreements, it needs to broaden its mandate to solve vital issues of the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion and stimulation of development and the mobilization of the efforts that the international community must carry out to combat future challenges and threats.

The globalization process has both positive and negative features. With any new system, anxieties are bound to arise, particularly among those who feel oppressed by the process, and especially if we commit errors and permit misunderstandings to occur. The main role in preventing that anxiety should lie with the United Nations.

Those are some of the reasons why the Kyrgyz Republic favours increasing the overall effectiveness of the United Nations, which should be a results-oriented organization. We envision a United Nations with better management and a well ordered structure, an organization better prepared to cope with humanitarian and political crises. We also understand the need for overall, effective reform of the United Nations, including the expansion of the Security Council in both its categories, and we support such reform. Reform should be solidly grounded in respect for all United Nations bodies that have already proven their endurance.

The aim of Kyrgyzstan's participation in world affairs is safe and friendly coexistence with all countries. This proceeds from the idea of the interdependence of the world, and mutually beneficial activities, on an equal footing, on the part of all countries and peoples. That is the basis for President Askar Arkaev's concept of "Silk Road diplomacy". Restoring the Silk Road is the central idea of a wide range of active historical processes based on a universal and creative dynamic that is founded on the needs of mankind. The realization of that concept will be impossible without the strengthening of friendly, trusting, fruitful relationships among all States, not only those along the great Silk Road. This concept can be realized only on the basis of universal access to all the achievements of human civilization. Our vision of the restoration of the Silk Road involves a new culture of peace and a new culture of human existence in a clean environment free from suffering, hunger, poverty and illiteracy.

As it crosses the threshold of the third millennium, Kyrgyzstan, like other Central Asian States, has been facing various threats, such as international terrorism and religious extremism. Terrorism is most often accompanied by illegal trafficking in weapons and in drugs. These factors pose a genuine, grave threat to stability and security — and not only in our region. We in Kyrgyzstan are convinced that no individual country can cope on its own with these evils. Collective measures are necessary to overcome these problems. Terrorism has ceased to be the problem of any one State but rather represents a threat to the entire world community.

That is why the efforts of our countries should be supported by the international community, as the leaders of Central Asian countries have repeatedly declared. And the role of the United Nations and the Security Council in this process is especially important. First and foremost, my country will actively support the creation of an international system of measures for controlling terrorism and other forms of extremism.

I would like to highlight the situation in Afghanistan. The people of that country continue to bear many burdens, and to be the victims of violence and death. Moreover, that country has become a source of terrorism, drug trafficking and myriad other problems. Kyrgyzstan supports efforts undertaken by the United Nations, and also welcomes other useful initiatives. We express the hope that effective measures will be undertaken radically to improve conditions in Afghanistan. For our part, we sincerely wish to promote the prompt establishment of peace in Afghanistan and stability in the region as a whole. Accordingly, the Kyrgyz Republic reaffirms its readiness to host a peace conference on Afghanistan under United Nations auspices.

We all agree that dialogue and a desire to solve jointly all our common issues is far better than conflict and war. That is an absolute truth. During the summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held at Istanbul in November 1999, the President of Kyrgyzstan put forward the idea of organizing a forum-dialogue between the OSCE and the Organization of the Islamic Conference on matters of security, peace and sustainable development. Kyrgyzstan considers that such a forum-dialogue could promote the development of mechanisms for jointly confronting the threats and challenges that the States of

an extensive region now face. The forum-dialogue would strengthen mutual understanding and respect among peoples, and would continue the fruitful dialogue among civilizations.

The Kyrgyz Republic believes that the Millennium Summit represents a unique opportunity not only to discuss the problems facing us but also to adopt the correct programme of action. That is how we view the draft Millennium Declaration of the Summit. One can only understand a journey by embarking on it.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Lakshman Kadirgamar, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Kadirgamar: I have the honour to deliver, on behalf of the President of Sri Lanka, Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, the following message to the Millennium Summit:

> "Forty four years ago, when the United Nations was still young and full of hope, a former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, my late father, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, addressing the General Assembly from this very podium said:
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> > 'the prevention of war is a necessary factor for peace, but peace is something much more positive than that. In its true sense it means human understanding, human friendship and cooperation out of which, indeed, peace in its true form alone can rise. The United Nations is the one machine available to mankind today through which it can express this unconquerable spirit of man in his efforts to achieve that peace, friendship and collaboration'.
>
> "As the new millennium opens I ask myself — is the world a better place to live in today than it was 40 years ago? In some ways yes, in other ways no. Stark contrasts still abound. The unconquerable spirit of man remains undimmed. He has dived to the bottom of the oceans; he and his machines have soared to the highest heavens. Medical and surgical miracles have prolonged his life. Technological marvels in the fields of information and communication continue to dazzle us. But while undreamed of wealth and affluence have been generated in some quarters of the globe, in others mankind has plunged deeper into the abyss of poverty, hunger, disease and squalor. These problems remain to be addressed — and addressed urgently. We have been spared the horrors of another global war — an achievement for which the United Nations deserves great credit — but there is turmoil all around us. New threats have arisen to the stability and security of States. That is the problem I wish to address today.
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> "Peace among all States and peace among all peoples within States so that all, and not only some, may in safety, without fear, in dignity, without humiliation, in good health, and in material and spiritual well-being enjoy the wonders of life on this miracle we call the planet Earth — such is my dream, such is my hope for the future at this Millennium Summit.
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> "However, how do we all — all States and all peoples within States — go from dream to reality? Of the problems that could then arise — the problems of limited resources, competing priorities, cost-effective procedures, catastrophic disruptions — I shall not speak today. But I would like to speak today on the fundamentals of the United Nations structure — the fundamentals that we must protect and preserve for the future.
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> "It is here in the General Assembly that representatives of Governments, of peoples, of States gather in solemn assembly, governed by a Charter that assures States of their sovereign equality, their political independence, their territorial integrity. States, peoples, Governments, representatives, the Charter of the United Nations — these are the fundamentals of the United Nations.
>
> "This Organization, essential and pragmatic but still very fragile, reflects those fundamentals in its origins and composition, in its structure and capacities, and in its limitations. And always at the core, we find the entity we know as the State. That is as it should be. States are the principal organizational entities into which the peoples of this planet have gathered, and the inter-States system is the principal organizational edifice of the international community. If States weaken, so

will this Organization. If States are diminished, so will this Organization be diminished; for the entity we know as the State, there is no substitute.

"Let us remember that States are corporate entities of enormous complexity, differing entirely from the corporate entities of the private sector that are usually of single or limited purpose, and often authoritarian in management styles. If the management of a developed State with more than adequate resources can be a complex undertaking, how much more complex would be the management of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, post-colonial, developing State, where the legacies of centuries of a colonial past take more than one generation to erase?

"Where there is the use of armed force against a State, as in my country, the complexities within a State compound themselves many times over. My country, Sri Lanka, has had for many years an armed conflict within its territory that has complicated the lives of the entire population of the country. It is a conflict of an extraordinary nature. A very small group, schooled in and totally devoted to violence, standing outside the processes of peaceful society and participatory governance, achieving through the practice of systematic terror a national and international notoriety, rejecting all overtures for settlement of differences through dialogue, sustained by massive funding and other support from expatriates settled in countries of goodwill and open heart, continues to battle the State.

"This phenomenon is not indigenous to Sri Lanka alone. The Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly in 1997 that contained his proposals for United Nations reform referred to the powerful threats to government authority and civil society from networks of crime, narcotics, money-laundering and terrorism.

"When the security and integrity of one State is threatened by an armed group within it, it surely behoves all other States to deny that armed group any encouragement, succour or safe haven. That is my plea today on behalf of Sri Lanka.

"A democratic State — because of its openness, its laws, traditions and practices, its commitment to tolerance and dissent — is especially vulnerable to the deployment of force against it by any group within its boundaries. An internal armed challenge to any State anywhere is a challenge to all States everywhere. Unless all States, and democratic States in particular, agree to come to the aid of a State thus in peril, democracy itself will be imperilled everywhere. Democracy will not survive."

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Séverin Ntahomvukiye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Burundi.

Mr. Ntahomvukiye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): It is a privilege for me to take the floor at this solemn Millennium Summit, on behalf of the people and the Government of Burundi and the delegation accompanying me, and on my own behalf.

Since our allotted time is short, I wish to limit myself to informing the General Assembly on the development of the situation in my country, which, as is known, has been experiencing the horrors of civil war for seven years. Consideration of the other international issues is developed in the text of my statement, which will be distributed.

Two years ago, from this same rostrum, the President of the Republic of Burundi, Mr. Pierre Buyoya, spoke on the comprehensive and inclusive peace process that had just been launched. Everyone, inside and outside the country, was skeptical about the positive outcome of this difficult enterprise.

Where are we today? The Burundian people are in the process of turning a page in their history. The agreement on peace and national reconciliation was signed on 28 August in Arusha, Tanzania, before the eyes of the entire world, which hailed the occasion. That was a qualitative leap forward towards a better future for the Burundian people.

The Government pays a tribute to the tireless efforts of the Burundian negotiators of all leanings. It urges them to permanently bury the hatchet of war, to consolidate the gains of national unity and to lead the people on the path of development.

The Government of Burundi also expresses its great appreciation to the entire international community, and to the countries of the region in particular, for the assistance, advice and facilitation provided throughout this long and painful struggle for peace.

A special tribute goes to Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the engineer and catalyst of the peace process at its outset, as well as to Nobel Peace Prize winner President Nelson Mandela, whose skill, matchless mediation and unequalled determination succeeded in wearing down mistrust. He succeeded, and in fact it is the people of Burundi as a whole who won.

Everything has not yet been resolved. Major challenges remain to be met. Aside from some reservations expressed by certain parties, which have begun to be addressed, the greatest remaining challenge is ending the war, without which the implementation of the agreement is practically impossible. The meeting between the Government army and the armed groups, to be held on 20 September at Nairobi, Kenya, will be critical in this regard. Subsequently, the firm commitment of all parties will be necessary to implement the accord strictly in the nation's general interest.

Burundi is drained, destroyed and ruined after seven years of war, three years of embargo and the freezing of international assistance. The unavoidable prerequisite for renewing cooperation has always been the signature of the peace accord. This has been done. We launch a heartfelt appeal to all bilateral and multilateral partners to renew unreservedly their solidarity with Burundi.

It is our hope to attain a fair and sustainable peace. In that way, Burundi will be able to make its modest contribution to the realization of this Organization's primary objective: the maintenance of international peace and security.

I will end here. As I stated earlier, the rest of my statement addresses Burundi's view on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, particularly in connection with changing the Security Council through the equitable representation of all regions of the planet. It also addresses the struggle against poverty and international peace and security.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Angola.

Mr. Miranda (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese, English text furnished by the delegation*): This Summit provides us with an opportunity to address in-depth issues that are critical for the development and the well-being of all peoples of the world. Poverty and problems associated with it, such as unemployment, underemployment and lack of access to basic education, health and clean water, continue to increase in many countries.

Armed conflicts and local wars caused by social and political factors persist and endanger the lives of millions of people, widening the gap between rich and poor countries. They are among the main barriers to development. Over the last few years, economic, scientific and technological advances, unprecedented in the history of mankind, have been made. But they have benefited only a fifth of the world's population. This small percentage controls 86 per cent of the world's production, 82 per cent of export markets, 68 per cent of foreign direct investment and 74 per cent of all telephone lines on the planet.

Far from reducing poverty, initiatives in developing countries to counter this income concentration trend through structural adjustment programmes have ended up increasing inequalities because they promote only growth and not human development. This is happening primarily in African countries, where almost half the population survives on less than $2 a day.

Although globalization has had a major impact on international relations, affecting all areas of human life, and especially the development process in poor countries, these nations still lack the capacity to face the challenges engendered by this process and are unable to take advantage of the opportunities being created or to minimize its unfavourable aspects.

In fact, what we are witnessing is the imposition of equal rules for countries at different stages of development, thus limiting competitiveness for the weak. To benefit all, a new, fair and more sustainable economic order is necessary, as well as a change in the present international financial order to make it capable of reducing the gap between rich and poor.

In this process of increasing inequality, we also need to take into account the external debt. Far-reaching programmes intended to solve economic problems in developing countries have only increased poverty, misery and marginalization, further deepening the vicious cycle of debt, poverty and under-development.

In a global context, Africa is the poorest of all continents. It should, therefore, receive global assistance, including debt re-scheduling, and even debt relief or forgiveness. Africa's development should be financed by a global assistance fund that would link economic reform to poverty eradication.

Many previous speakers have stressed the need to reform our Organization so that it can meet the present challenges of today's world. Angola fully concurs. Especially important are current proposals for greater democratization and strengthening of the United Nations so that it can achieve its unique mission of promoting a more dignified, prosperous and peaceful world, preserving and reinforcing the legitimate interests of all.

Angola reiterates its firm support for the African common position on equitable representation in and restructuring of the Security Council, designed to secure two permanent and two non-permanent seats for Africa on an enlarged Security Council.

In conclusion, allow me to reaffirm Angola's determination to contribute to a more secure and prosperous world for all in this third millennium.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Sélim Tadmoury, Chairman of the delegation of Lebanon.

Mr. Tadmoury (Lebanon): Lebanon is particularly proud to participate in this historically significant Summit, especially after the recent liberation of its southern part, thanks to the steadfastness and the resistance of the Lebanese people and to the support of the international community. The Israeli occupation, which lasted for more than 22 years, witnessed the loss of thousands of innocent civilian lives and inflicted extensive damage on the country's most vital infrastructures. Insidiously, it paralyzed Lebanon's economy on the whole, impeded its socio-economic development and inhibited its historic contribution to human civilization, a contribution which Lebanon had been extending for 5,000 years.

Lebanon considers the liberation of its territory from the Israeli occupation an incomplete step. It must be followed by a solution to the question of the Palestinian refugees, particularly those whom Lebanon has been hosting on its soil for more than 50 years. Our ultimate objective is to reach a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, based on the Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights up to the line of 4 June 1967, according to resolutions of international legitimacy and to the terms of reference of the 1991 Madrid Conference.

Lebanon also calls upon the international community to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights and, above all, the right to self-determination and to establish their independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

While we gather today to reaffirm our belief in the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, Lebanon confirms the objective correlation between the establishment of international peace and security and the development process and peace-building as well. It is so obvious that armed conflicts have prevented and continue to prevent countries and people from involving their human and economic resources in the process of development and peace-building. Enhancing the United Nations mechanisms of peacemaking and promoting proper conditions for sustainable development require the reform of the most important bodies of our Organization — namely, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. By doing so, the United Nations system can contribute to the improvement of the living conditions in developing countries. The reform of the Security Council, extensively debated among Member States, should be based on transparency, rationalization of working methods and equitable representation in light of the political, demographic and economic development that has occurred since the end of the Second World War, although, in order to achieve this goal, the international community is invited to adopt a courageous action in this direction.

We equally view the necessity to reform the Economic and Social Council by re-evaluating and revising its role and its mandate in a manner that both the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council could function in a harmonious system responding effectively to the needs of our century. No one today can separate our right to enjoy peace and security from our right to achieve development.

The long march of the United Nations has, particularly during the last two decades, witnessed valuable achievements in the human rights arena. A significant number of international treaties, mostly relating to the protection of women, children, refugees, and conventions relating to peace and war, have been

adopted. In addition to those treaties, a number of United Nations bodies have been created to fulfil the treaties' objectives. This current Millennium Summit should uphold the unprecedented international and universal achievements which will be conducive to a new global human order.

However, in spite of the progress accomplished in the human rights domain, Arab territories remain under Israeli occupation, their inhabitants suffering continuously under the deliberate and violent infringements of the occupying forces. We remind the international community of the long ordeal of Lebanese citizens, who have been detained for years in Israeli manned jails as hostages, denied due process of law, in defiance of the principles of international laws and conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. We call for their immediate release.

Lebanon strongly hopes that the final declaration to be issued pursuant to our Summit will be a renewed act of faith in the Charter of the United Nations, that its contents will accurately reflect fair, peaceful and constructive solutions to the uncertainties and predicaments of the people of all nations, and that its headlines will bear witness to the Secretary-General's ceaseless endeavour for peace and to his tireless efforts to re-direct the United Nations to a position of high compatibility with the aspirations of future generations.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Michel Kafando, Chairman of the delegation of Burkina Faso.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) *(spoke in French)*: It is a signal honour for me to address this Millennium Summit on behalf of President Blaise Compaore, who very much wished to participate in this. Unfortunately, pressing engagements have prevented him from doing so.

The occasion which brings us together today is unprecedented and provides us all with special opportunity to ask about the future of humankind at the dawn of the third millennium.

The past century saw the birth of the United Nations which set itself the goal of saving us from the scourge of war and of forging between people and nations links of solidarity, friendship and cooperation of a new kind. Despite this political will, strongly expressed at San Fransisco, the United Nations did not succeed in saving the world from the cold war and the unbridled arms race.

We, the small nations, in bodies such as the Non-Aligned Movement, have ceaselessly drawn attention to the dangerous and harmful consequences of this balance of terror. Our leitmotif has always been to reverse this trend and to devote the vast resources which it swallowed up to activities of developing the poor countries.

We are obliged to note that these repeated appeals have not been heard and that the gap between poor and rich countries is today wider than ever.

The phenomenon of globalization seems already to have relegated to oblivion what we have experienced. For us, the developing countries, the same questions, the same concerns remain. Our peoples wonder what globalization can bring them that is more or better. They wonder what impact it can have on their daily concerns and their quest for well-being.

Thus, for us, it is not a question of coming here to follow a ritual, but rather to share our vision of the best way of managing globalization in the clear interest of peoples and nations.

It is a fact that whilst the end of the cold war rang the death knell on East/West antagonism, it in no way reduced the imbalance between rich and poor countries.

Thus we should ask what today is the level of commitment of willingness and the political will of the rich countries, who hold the capital and the technology, to carry out specific actions so as to avoid globalization becoming yet another occasion to marginalize the developing countries.

We are convinced that globalization must go hand in hand with a greater democratization of international relations and with a profound reform of the decision-making procedures within the organizations of the United Nations system, first of all, at the level of the Security Council. By thus giving all nations, small and large, the opportunity to make their contribution to building a more just and fairer world, we will increase our chances of reducing frustrations, sources of tensions and conflicts and we will then better serve the cause of peace, since that is the mission given to our Organization.

For all of these reasons, Burkina Faso appeals to the conscience of humankind so that the Republic of China quickly regain its place within the United Nations so as to guarantee the fundamental right of its twenty-three million inhabitants to participate in the management of the activities of the international community.

In conclusion, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century which advocates major actions to be taken in order to equip ourselves better to cope with the major challenges and the concerns of our peoples.

These ideas are taken up in the draft declaration of the Millennium which will be submitted for our adoption at the end of our work.

Our hope is that the Summit will develop, based on this declaration, a plan of action and will create a follow-up mechanism to ensure its effective and diligent implementation.

The meeting rose at 2 p.m.